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OF  
CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

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STUDIES IN THE HISTORY  
OF  
CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

*NEW TESTAMENT AND POST-APOSTOLIC*

BY THE  
REV. JAMES MACGREGOR, D.D.

OAMARU

SOME TIME PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH

AUTHOR OF "THE APOLOGY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION"

"THE REVELATION AND THE RECORD"

BIBLE CLASS HANDBOOKS ON GALATIANS AND EXODUS

ETC. ETC.

*"Be always ready to give (Gr. apologia) an answer to him that asketh you  
(Gr. logos) a reason of the hope that is in you."—1 PET. iii. 15*

*"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord."—ISA. xliii. 10*

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1894

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

THE Author desires to place in the front of the concluding volume of this series, at least the names of those old friends to whom, in addition to the editors of *The Apology*, etc., he is so deeply indebted for most valuable work, which was out of his own power, namely—Alexander Taylor Innes, Esq., advocate, and the Rev. Messrs. Salmond, of South Morningside, Edinburgh; Hill, of Renfrew; and Kennedy, of the Edinburgh New College Library. Beyond his expectation, the labour is already proving to have been “not in vain” (1 Cor. xv. 58). To have been enabled to bring it to a close, in circumstances of exceptional difficulty, is new cause for thankfulness on his part to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.



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## PREFATORY NOTE REGARDING RICHARD BAXTER.

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SIR JAMES STEPHEN—*Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, "Richard Baxter"—who places him as, next to Grotius (*De Veritate Religionis Christianæ*, A.D. 1662), the earliest of the apologists for Christianity, moralises on what he deems the uselessness of such defence of religion, contrasting it with the manner of proceeding in the original propagandism of Christianity among mankind. He curiously—for a learned reviewer of ecclesiastical history—seems unaware that *apology* was the distinctive contribution of Christianity to human literature in the intensely propagandist period immediately following the apostolic age, and that the primeval propagandism of Christ and His apostles was essentially apologetic, as also had been the labour of Moses and the prophets.

Baxter himself states in the preface (A.D. 1666) to his *Reasons of the Christian Religion*, A.D. 1667, that (cp. Fabricius, *Delectus Argumentorum*) many such works had previously appeared, by Grotius, Mornaix (Du Plessis), and others whom he names, including one by himself—*The Unreasonableness of Infidelity*; but that as to the present work, which for substance had long been in writing, he could not in conscience withhold from the public what had been blessed to his own soul, as the fruit of inquiries he had been under necessity of making for his personal establishment in the faith: inasmuch as to his knowledge occasionally real Christians, especially in seasons of spiritual depression, are darkened and weakened in their soul's life of believing by clouds of doubt regarding the rational foundation of historical belief in Christianity; while by such doubts in the common mind worldly men are encouraged to persist in their godlessness under an impression that the religion is perhaps after all not entitled to claim their heart and life for God; and those who really seek after Him, inquiring about this religion, are entitled to know from its adherents what "reason" they are able to give "of the hope that is in them" (1 Pet. iii. 15).

It may appear that in this matter Baxter was of the mind of "the shepherd apostle" (cp. 2 Pet. i. 5-21), perhaps led into it similarly by "the Chief Shepherd" (see Luke xxii. 32):—it may be to the benefit of Sir James Stephen himself. Baxter thus may have differed from Vinet (*Pastoral Theology*), who seems to think that private Christians are tried by doubts only as to their being personally in the faith, while (see Jas. ii. 19) he might not go so far as Erskine of Linlathen (*Letters*) in the direction of ascribing all ungodliness of professing Christians to their want of simply historical belief in Christianity (as to which matter see Jas. i. 29).

OAMARU, July 1894.



# STUDIES

IN THE

## HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.

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### INTRODUCTORY: WITH REFERENCE TO WORDS AND THINGS.

THE general question in these studies is, with reference to defence of Christianity by reasoning,—How has that defence proceeded historically? how has the matter been regarded and handled by Christians in the post-apostolic ages? how was it placed by Christ and His apostles in the primeval foundation of the Church? To go back to the remoter past times of Moses and the prophets (Eph. ii. 20) is not necessary for the special purpose of the present inquiry, excepting in a relation to the present hour which will be spoken of in due time.

The subject of our studies thus being the history of what may be called the *primary* apologetics of Christianity, a fair consideration of it may be found suggesting a—so to speak—“secondary formation” apologetics, or, supplementary defence of religion on the ground of the history of that primary defence, as having been presented by the founders and adherents of this religion. The simple fact that Christ, His apostles, and their followers in post-apostolic ages, primitive and modern, have *offered* proof of this religion, which addresses itself to the common reason of mankind, to be weighed in the judgment of the community of sane men, may reasonably lead thoughtful men toward the conclusion, that presumably there *is* available proof of this religion, so that somehow it

must be demonstrably true. And to bring the historical reality of *the fact*, of that offer of proof, to dwell in the mind so as to be in duly influential possession of the judgment, is one result thus of some value to be expected from our study of the history of apologetics. Further,—

Study of the history from such a view-point as is thus suggested comes to be, more or less, effectively or virtually (perhaps unspoken), *criticism* of the apologetics of the past (and of the present as in the stream of history). And that criticism, or (in plain English) exercise of *judgment* on the matters, may serve toward forming the mind into a distinct perception of the true nature of this defence of religion, and into clear comprehension of the religion itself:—as the art of war, and the character and constitution of a militant nation, may be learned from the history of its campaigns. Such instructiveness, invested with a picturesque variety of moving interest, may conceivably be found in the history of apologetics, though the old apology should now be antiquated,—so that its methods and instruments, *e.g.* in the hands of a Lightfoot or a Cairns, are as a barbarism of slings and arrows in comparison with Professor Huxley's "weapons of precision" (as to which, see further on). Even in that case it might be possible to learn something about the religion and its evidence from the face that was put on it by its defenders in the past, and the heart that beat in their defences; and something, in this and other ways, about the true spirit and principles of right apology.

Ancient warfare is now found not uninformative by real "scientists" who have no thought of going back to the use of ancient weapons of war. And the spirit of patriotism and the cause of freedom are not antiquated through lapse of time. Even methods and instruments are not necessarily antiquated because old. The spade remains in use; and the syllogism. Euclid still retains a master's place in Geometry, as Aristotle does in Rhetoric and Formal Logic. And it is conceivable that there should be for all ages at bottom essentially *one apologetic*, which we may be greatly aided in mastering for the relative purposes of our new time by study of it such as it has appeared "at sundry times and in divers manners" in the past. Even "a scientist" may be the wiser,



if he duly consider that memory is mother of the muses, and that if invention come into her place, imagination may usurp the throne of judgment.<sup>1</sup>

The character of our intended studies, thus far determined by the nature of the subject, will for us be further defined in our prosecution of them by distinction from kindred studies of the same general subject under specifically different aspects. For illustration of this the author here takes a liberty of reference to two previous works of his own, as going along with the present to constitute effectively a series which it closes. Every one of the three claims to be complete in itself, with a substantive purpose and interest of its own, on an independently distinct foundation (cp. Eph. ii. 20). But they all are occupied, every one in its own way, with historical apologetics as their general subject. And they all are, every one in its own way, in pursuance of a plan for dealing with the subject of the proof of Christianity *historically*, on the view that *proof of Christianity is constituted by the whole historical phenomenon of this religion in the world*.

The central substance of the author's contribution to working out that plan is in his work, *The Apology of the Christian Religion historically regarded*: a work which in effect is a commentary on the external evidence of Christianity,—1. *indirect* external evidence, especially as appearing in “the religion at work in the second century,” and 2. *direct* external evidence, particularly as constituted by miracle in work or words, (1) of Christ, (2) of the apostles, (3) of Moses and the prophets. For that commentary a Prologue,—of *logical foundation*,—was provided in a subsequent work (which, too, is complete in itself), *The Revelation and the Record: Essays on matters of previous question with reference to the proof of Christianity*: in which the matters handled are, (1) relatively to Revelation, the *supernatural*,—as involved in the system of things, and constitution of man, and fact of religion,—as implied in the internal evidence of Christianity and the Bible,—and as operative in the divine inspiration of Scripture; (2) relatively to Record, the *New Testament canon*, or the title of the Scriptures now received on that canon to be held as genuine writings of apostles and their authorised associates. The present work (also complete in itself, yet) also is in

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *criticism*.

completion of the plan, as it were by way of Epilogue, of *corroborative illustration*, to the central substance of commentary in *The Apology*, etc., correspondingly to the office of *The Revelation and the Record* as prologue of logical foundation.

Christian apologetics in history is<sup>1</sup> itself a not unimportant part of the whole historical phenomenon of Christianity among mankind. But even in order to obtaining the full benefit of that one aspect of the history as throwing light on this whole phenomenon, it is well to concentrate our attention in the first instance on that one aspect. And now the present writer, in accordance with the plan on which he has been working hitherto, will in the following studies not aim at exhaustive discussion of apologetic questions raised in history, but rather at historical commentation on the conditions out of which the questions have arisen, and the manner and spirit in which they have been met by earnest contenders for "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Approaching the subject as from a distance, we may on the threshold of inquiry find profitable exercise in considering certain *unfavourable prepossessions* regarding apologetics, which<sup>2</sup> have place in the mind of some, who look at the matter only as it appears on the surface or at certain angles. In considering such outside impressions of the matter, we shall be in a way of attaining toward clear distinctness of conception of the thing in its own true nature.

1. For instance, in some minds there is a vague disfavour toward apologetics, under influence of an impression that addiction to it somehow tends to form and foster in men a carnality of mere contentiousness in connection with religion, or a merely carnal combativeness on behalf of this religion because it is ours or our people's, which may sink into the vileness of special pleading in its interest, endeavouring "to make the worse appear the better reason." Such a character may conceivably be created or strengthened in the warfare of apologetics. But that is not necessarily by reason of evil tendency inherent in the nature of the warfare. It may be only through faultiness in the moral condition of the man.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. a nation's defensive wars.

<sup>2</sup> See Prefatory Note above.



"The Lord is a man of war." His regenerate redeemed are "an exceeding great army" (cp. Ps. cx. 3). And the Christian calling is to labour of both battles and campaigns, "enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. ii. 3). But is it not possible (ver. 5) for one who "strives for masteries" to "strive lawfully"? May Christians not "contend" lovingly and purely while contending "earnestly" (Jude, 3)? Is it a manifest self-corrupting abuse of a man's gift of reason to endeavour to lead others into belief of this religion, which he regards as man's true way of life in fellowship with God?

The circumstance that apologetics is polemical, a warfare against men and things regarded as foes of this religion, is not conclusive against it. It may be best for men to be vanquished by its reasoning: destruction in them of the things assailed by it may be their deliverance from chains of darkness. The warfare is defensive, for God's glory in man's true life. The soldiers are not mere mercenaries, fighting animals like gladiators. *These* do not make "good soldiers." Even a mercenary that is a good soldier is not a fighting animal.<sup>1</sup> And as to the defensive warfare at present in our question,—In point of *historical fact*, have the Christian apologists as a class really been like the gladiators—or, like those whom Richard Baxter calls "dogmatical word-warriors"—fighting animals of the religion rather than its devotees? Is this a character of the Baxters and Pascals, the Chalmerses and Neanders, the Anselms and Augustines, the Justins and Tertullians, known to history as by eminence "the apologists"—defenders of Christianity at the bar of human reason? Was it a character of Christ and His apostles in their inauguration of this apologetic? The primitive "period of apologetics" was a period, not of mere self-assertion in religion, or mean falsehood in special pleading for it, but, most gloriously, of self-denial in confession and self-sacrifice in martyrdom for truth.

<sup>1</sup> The gladiators of the Roman empire were more than useless as real soldiers. Without love of country, or care about rules and principles of honourable soldiery, when in straits of war they were embodied in the army, it was found that they could not be trusted, and that for the public safety it was necessary to dismiss them, or to disband their legions.

2. A kindred impression is, that addiction to questions of Christian evidence, looking at the religion from its outside, must result in a habit of externalism in religion, living without inward fellowship with God. And it may be so through man's fault:—even as addiction to outward forms of worship may, with a stone heart, petrify into hypocrisy of mere ceremonialism. But in that case the evil does not arise out of the nature of the exercise. Baxter found the exercise of essential value for his personal establishment in the faith. The apologists we have named all were men conspicuous by unfeigned personal godliness; and real apologetics does not necessarily tend to the worldliness of looking at religion as merely a thing to be fought about on the outside (see John xix. 25, xx. 31; 1 John i. 1–3). At the first general Council of Nice, before the fathers entered on their momentous deliberations regarding the catholic doctrine of the godhead of Christ, two professional debaters stood forward as if in a preliminary performance of mere logical sword-play: whereupon a grave divine objected to the unseemly show, on the ground that what Christ has given to His Church is, not logic, but faith and the word of God. Though this or that apologist should play the part of a mere debater, chopping logic about religion, nevertheless apologetics is not necessarily a thing apart from that gift of Christ.

The artillery of an army is the army's own force on the fiery front of battle. A nation's frontier defences are the nation's own armed strength defensive on the frontier; and all its munitions as well as manhood there are derived from the inland resources of the country that is there defended. Apologetics in the true sense is the religion defending itself. In our own day it is a manifest fact that the really effective defence of Christianity is connected, not with abandonment of the inward substance of the religion—as if Judas had thought of defending Christianity by betraying Christ—but with firm adherence to the substance of the faith (cp. 1 John v. 4). And in past ages, at the founding of the religion among mankind (1 Cor. xv. 4, etc.; cp. iii. 8–15), and in subsequent times, those who effectively were the real apologists of the religion have ever been also conspicuously the lovers and propagandists of its “gospel of the grace of God.”

In a nation's wars of independence we may see its true face, and feel the true beating of its heart. And historically there is no really memorable movement of apologetics that has not been more or less nearly coincident with spiritual movement, in soul and substance, of "the faith once delivered to the saints."<sup>1</sup>

3. There are unfavourable impressions even in connection with the very word "apology," "apologise," "apologetic," in this Christian use—of representing defence of Christianity by reasoning. And in justification of this use of the word, it might suffice to state the fact as to its usefulness, that the usage is found in practice to serve a good working purpose of the religion, for convenience of defensive exposition, that could not be conveniently served otherwise: thus far, "the Lord hath need of it." Every doctrine is allowed to have its own use of words, as every trade has its own tools. But a further formality of justifying the usage will serve our purpose in lingering here at the threshold of inquiry, namely, to gather into recollection things which, in the interest of the inquiry, it may be well to have in our mind's view from the outset.

An unfavourable impression in connection with the use of words now in question occasionally finds utterance as if on the part of superior culture—literary or philosophical—perhaps in jeering at "apology," as if the word in this application had implied an abjectness of confessing, that the religion "apologised" for has some cause to be ashamed of itself before the world, or need of begging pardon, "with bated breath and whispered humbleness," for existing under the sun. Men professing literary culture ought to know that the same use of the word, as meaning "answer" to accusation or "defence" against crimination, is, without any supposed abjectness of implication, classic in the literatures of modern civilised peoples:—witness, *e.g.*, Bishop Jewell's *Apology for the Church of England*, and the poet Racine's famous verse, *Arnauld, le grand Arnauld, fait mon Apologie*. And those

<sup>1</sup> At Jude 3, the "once" means *once for all*: the faith is not to be changed. The Greek for *deliver* is the word which in the New Testament represents *tradition*, *e.g.* at 1 Cor. xi. 2; cp. ver. 23. *N.B.* There may be *worldly*, unchristian tradition (Col. ii. 8).



who are addicted to philosophy in particular ought to be aware of the fact that—witness the following Note—“apology,” word and thing, in that same sense, was, centuries before Christ came, consecrated in the memory of civilised mankind, through connection with martyrdom for truth on the part of one whom Cicero, himself among the highest names in the world’s literature, has placed and crowned as “beyond comparison the prince of philosophers” (*philosophorum facile princeps*).

NOTE on relative use in Classic Greek.—*Apologia* is from *logos*: which primarily meant “word” (John i. 1, etc.), but often (as at 1 Pet. iii. 15) means “reason”; a word being reason on the lip, as reason is a word in the heart or mind (so that in Homer a common expression for “speaking” is employed in the sense of “thinking”—cp. Ps. xiv. 1). *Logos* as meaning *rational* utterance, the utterance of orderly distinct thought, easily runs into meaning *account*: which (Luke xvi. 2) may be *narrative* account, or (as in the case of the unjust steward) account *explanatory, justificative, vindicatory, defensive*. Whence the usage of employing *apologia* in the sense of “answer” to accusation or “defence” against crimination as before a judge.

“The Apology of Socrates” is Plato’s title for the discourse of that “prince of philosophers”—B.C. 400—before the Athenian judges, when on trial for his life under accusation of having, through his teaching, introduced new gods and corrupted the youth (with reference to Athenian feeling relatively to *innovation* in religion, cp. Acts xvii. 18–20).

When the alleged offence is in a doctrine, or in a practice arising out of doctrine, then the right apology is, “defence” of the doctrine, “answering” objections to it, “clearing” it of aspersions or “calumnies,” demonstrating its truth,—*e.g.* through exhibition of its real nature. Accordingly Socrates will not, in the customary manner of men placed as he now is, throw himself on the mercy of his judges as begging for his life (which he knows to be foredoomed, and in truth is not unwilling to be relieved of). But he defends his doctrine, on the ground that in practical effect it has not been detrimental but salutary to those embracing it, while theoretically it is in accordance with most profoundly true vital principles of all rational thought and action.

Why should "apology," thus ennobled by connection with philosophy at highest culmination, not be allowed to retain the far loftier new nobility to which it has been exalted in the service of God's kingdom among men? It is true that there is a vulgar error of imagining that the word of necessity means "making excuse" in a mean way (Luke xiv. 18). But surely professors of superior culture ought not to take the lead of vulgar ignorance in moving for degradation from rightful nobility in speech.

Again, to the word, so "spoken against" (see 2 Pet. ii. 12), dislike is occasionally manifested at what in more than one respect is an opposite extreme,—on the part of men claiming to be distinctively "Bible Christians." They perhaps are under the influence of some feeling, that this use of "apology" implies a baseness of conceding that the Bible or the Bible religion cannot stand in its own strength, or an arrogancy of assuming that it may be held up by supporting stays of *our* defensive reasoning. It is conceivable that *they*, or other men, should be so held up. Suppose the Bible or its religion to be in itself an "impregnable Rock," still Mr. Gladstone's reasonings may conceivably (cp. John iv. 39-42) be serviceable in leading his neighbour to *see* that. And "Bible Christians" ought to look twice before seeing either arrogance or baseness in a usage that was current among Christians long before our day; for instance, in the eighteenth century, witness English Bishop Watson's *Apology for Christianity*, and, in the seventeenth century, witness French Abaddie's more celebrated *Apologie de la Religion Chrétienne*, and, in the sixteenth, Melancthon's yet more celebrated *Apology for the Augsburg Confession*; while—still more impressively for them—"apology" was the most frequent title of Christian publications in that primitive "period of the persecutions," when to "apologise" for Christianity was to incur the risk of martyrdom on its behalf. But presumably they have not looked once. If they had once really looked for information as to this matter into that Bible in whose name they profess to censure the usage, they might have seen, behind the veil of translation, the usage in the Bible itself: "apology," "apologise," in current use of God's kingdom under the apostles, after having as it were passed through the mint-

age of the King, so as to be stamped for circulation with imprint of His royalty.

A distinct and full realisation of the fact as to that New Testament usage, taken into the mind here at the threshold of our inquiry, may serve toward preparation of the mind for further prosecution of the inquiry. And with a view to such preparatory impression, we make the following—

NOTES on the New Testament use of “*apology*,” “*apologise*.”—The usage is obscured by translation: all the more in our version because in it the rendering is not always the same; though it always is “answer,” “defence,” “excusing,” or “clearing.” The following is a digested account of all the New Testament places where the Greek word—noun or verb—occurs.

1. *It first occurs* in a report of two most memorable utterances of the Lord (Luke xi. 11, xxi. 14—“answer”). We may suppose that the original utterance was in “Hebrew” (Aramaic), and that the Greek rendering is Luke’s own. The expression there is popular and free, so that in any case it would not be reasonable for us to fix its meaning in the strict sense of our technical apologetics. The theological use of *apologia* may be seen coming into existence at 1 Pet. iii. 15 (“answer”), in apostolic prescription of Christian defence; but there, too, we ought not to strain the meaning. Elsewhere the usage is exclusively Pauline in this respect, that it appears only either in Paul’s Epistles, or in historical works of the Pauline Luke. In *Acts*, where (ii., x.) Peter apologises,<sup>1</sup> the word “apology,” “apologise,” is employed only in some connection with Paul’s evangelistic labours. The legal-technical sense—“answer,” or “defence,” as before a judge—comes into full view through judicial proceedings in his case in Palestine, and colours his (subsequent) epistolary employment of *apologia*, which refers to similar proceedings in his case at Rome.

2. *Either “defence” or “answer.”* is in our version always the rendering, except at Rom. ii. 15 (“excusing”) and 2 Cor. vii. 11 (“clearing”). The classic meaning is in the original somewhat clouded by metaphor at Rom. ii. 15, where conscience is the judge, at 2 Cor. vii. 11, where Christians are on their defence before Paul, and at 1 Cor. ix. 3, where he is judged of his readers or hearers. In all the places but one—namely, *Acts* xix. 33, where Alexander “would have made his *defence*”—it is in some way the Christian religion or cause that is apologised

<sup>1</sup> There he is the protapologist of Christianity; at 1 Pet. iii. 15 he is the apostolic preceptor of apology.



for. And ordinarily (see Luke xii. 11, xxi. 12) the judge is a regularly constituted authority; though in two cases, of irregular trial—at Acts xix. 33 and xxi. 30—the judge is only a mass meeting of the people.

3. "*Defence*" is our version of *apologia* at Acts xxii. 1, where Paul says, 'men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my *apology*'; and at Phil. i. 7, 17—two places on which we now shall dwell for a little. The Epistle is written from prison (vers. 7, 13, 14, 16), presumably (see iv. 22) at Rome. To this the apostle was brought by his own appeal to Cæsar. And it may be with a reference to an appearance of his before Cæsar's throne, that he says at i. 7, "both in my *apology* and confirmation of the gospel, ye are partakers of my grace." A "grace" lightly prized by him (ver. 29) is, being permitted not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake. And (iv. 10, 14–16; cp. Heb. x. 34) in *this* grace the Philippians may be regarded as partners with Paul, in that they have with considerate generosity contributed of their means to his temporal support:—*they* thus in a sense "apologise" in the person of the apostle. Very different is the temper of some (cp. iii. 18, 19) of whom he speaks at i. 15–17 (where the text has got somehow dislocated, but the substance of meaning remains clear). They preach the gospel "out of contention, supposing to add affliction to his bonds."<sup>1</sup> But others preach it out of love, "knowing that I am set for *apology* of the gospel." The Greek for "set," here *keimai*, has natively the meaning of "I lie" (down), or "I am laid" (low); so that here there may be a shade of the pathetic significance, "I lie low" (helpless in bonds) for the good cause. But the sense of meaning simply "placed" for the defence of it, is in the connection very nobly adequate.<sup>2</sup>

4. "*Answer*" is our version of *apologise* at Acts xxv. 8, where Paul apologises before the Roman governor Festus; and of *apology* at Acts xxv. 16, where Felix placed him under shield of the Roman principle of law, that no man be put to death before he have his accusers face to face with him,—so that he may have (lit.) "place for *apology*."<sup>3</sup> At Acts xxiv. 10 Paul had said before Felix, "I do the more cheerfully *apologise*" ("answer"). In Acts xxvi. ("the combat deepens") *apologise* ("answer") occurs four times,—“Agrippa said, Thou art at liberty to *apologise* . . . Paul stretched out his hand, and *apologised* . . . I shall *apologise* before thee this day . . . As he thus

<sup>1</sup> Cp. in "Song of the Shirt," the swallows "show their sunny backs, and twit me with the spring."

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Luther at Worms: "Here I stand. I can no other. God help me!"

<sup>3</sup> Cp. *place* for repentance at Heb. xii. 17.

*apologised*, Festus saith with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself."

So where we last see this great apostle (2 Tim. iv. 16) at the close of his dying testimony. This Epistle, too, belongs to an imprisonment, which perhaps is later as well as harsher than that referred to at Acts xxviii. 30. He now (vers. 6-8) is in the near view of "dying for the name of the Lord Jesus" (see Acts xxi. 13; cp. Phil. ii. 17). He has "apologised" once (in "the lion's" mouth), and is like to have occasion for again "apologising." And he says, "At my first *apology* no man stood with me" (cp. Dan. iii. 25). But (ver. 17) One stood with him, and strengthened him,—One who Himself (Luke xxii. 43) in the days of His flesh had (cp. Heb. iv. 14-16) been similarly strengthened, and who (Acts vii. 55, 56) in His glory of heavenly exaltation had similarly strengthened the proto-martyr Stephen. Otherwise left alone "to beard the lion," as Christ had been when the disciples all forsook Him and fled, Paul (cp. Acts xxii. 20) may now recall to mind that other faithful witness, who saw death's door to be heaven's gate, while those who slew him laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. Stephen did not call down fire from heaven to punish them. With dying breath he prayed for their forgiveness; so following (1 Pet. i. 21, etc.) in the steps of Christ's example on the cross. And Paul now prays for those who stood not with him at the trying moment, while not expressly saying that their absence was a sin. Perhaps in them "the spirit was willing" though "the flesh was weak." But if he thus bear with weakness, he does not share it. He can pray for them, but he will not flee with them. Now, as before (Phil. ii. 17), he is ready "with joyfulness" to be "offered on the sacrifice and service of the faith." Such (cp. Acts xx. 35, 36), in the Scripture annals of time, is the last appearance of Paul the magnanimous.

It is instructive to compare this last appearance of the word in the New Testament with its first appearance there, at Luke xii. 11. Paul, where he speaks of his own apologising, connects it (Phil. i. 7) with "*confirmation*" of the gospel (cp. Mark xvi. 20; Acts xiv. 3), and (2 Tim. iv. 16) with a completed proclamation of the message (R.V.) through him, and all the Gentiles hearing. Such an appearance of his in an imperial court at Rome, as (Acts xxiv.-xxvi.) he had made before the Palestinian Roman authorities, might make a deep impression at the heart of the world-empire (Luke ii. 1). The story of Paul himself, such as he had repeatedly told it

when evangelising in Palestine, is effectively an apologetic of the Christian religion,—answering objections to it, defending it against criminations, clearing it of “calumnies,” constituting proof of its truth and divinity. Some—even “of Cæsar’s household”—might, by force of reason thus brought home to them, be, like Cornelius and his friends (Acts x.) under influence of Peter’s apologetic, not almost but altogether persuaded to be Christians. And the survivors of that “huge multitude” of believers at Rome who<sup>1</sup> at this time had undergone so gloriously (cp. Phil. ii. 15, 16) the “fiery trial” of a great persecution under Nero, may (cp. Luke xxii. 32 ; 1 Pet. v. 10) have been greatly strengthened for further endurance, or for untroubled anticipation of such trials to come, by the bold front which the gospel showed to “the lion,” and the unshrinking defence with full proclamation of it on the part of (as the *Romans* know, Rom. xi. 13) the martyr prince-apostle of the Gentiles (Eph. iii. 8).

The impression thus made at the head centre of heathen world-empire may have spread fast and far throughout its provinces and beyond its borders. For (2 Tim. ii. 9) God’s word was not in bonds as Paul was ; and, *e.g.*, may have gone out from his prison even to Spain, where, as the *Roman* Christians knew (Rom. xv. 24, 28), his heart had long before been. His Roman apologising may thus have been to that “whole world” like the angels descending into Siloam’s pool,—causing a central impulse of healing movement that went throbbing out into ever wider circle beyond circle until the beneficent agitation filled all in all.

But to dwell on the possible or intended effects of the apologising would here and now be premature. At present what we are seeking is, primarily, to take into our mind a full and fair impression of the sanction that the use of words, “apology,” “apologise,” has in New Testament Scripture use. And for that preliminary purpose our present exercise on the New Testament verbal usage has perhaps gone far enough.

The same general purpose, to indent on the mind at this outset what is desirable by way of preliminary impression, may perhaps be further promoted by a yet further exercise on

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* xv. 44.



use of words, in a wider connection with the things which are to be the subject of our following studies. The usage now to be recalled to mind, while having roots in Scripture history, became unfolded into completed explicitness of specific significance only in the subsequent "period of the persecutions"; and we now will follow it into that historical unfolding.

1. The Christian use of the words "*confession*" and "*martyrdom*"—in connection with "apology." In the persecutions the Church was a Bush that burneth unconsumed.<sup>1</sup> And if (Luke xii. 11, xxi. 14) we regard apology as the articulate voice from that Bush, then in confession and martyrdom we shall see the luminous flame. Martyrdom simply as witness-bearing was by implication a mute apology through sufferings (John xxi. 19)—since testimony is a rational ground of belief, especially where there is (1 Pet. iv. 12) trial by fire. And after the middle-apostolic age, confession, though (Rom. x. 9, 10) natively not mute, had come to be so, ordinarily, as apology thus far, that it was actually inarticulate,—being silenced, or having only a stifled voice, that was not, like—*e.g.*—Paul's addresses to King Agrippa and the Jerusalem Jews, allowed to expand into apology.

In the earlier times, both at Jerusalem, in the Petrine foundation of the new kingdom, and more widely over the Roman empire in the Pauline extension movement, the adherents of this religion, when called in question on account of it, were allowed to give their own account of it, explaining it so as to defend it—and commend it: they had this "place for apology" by customary permission of magistrates or other "powers." In the second century there no longer was that freedom. Thus in the Bithynian persecution, A.D. 110,<sup>2</sup> professed Christianity was dealt with, not as a doctrine or system to be considered, but simply as open capital crime to be punished and suppressed. The accused was simply put to the testing question of fact, "Are you a Christian?" and so made to decide by simply his Yea or Nay, between, on the one hand, disowning the religion or renouncing his hitherto profession of it, and, on the other hand, suffering the punishment of what under the law of the empire was an offence inferring

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Nec tamen consumebatur*—Motto of the Reformed Scottish Church.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, *Letter to Trajan*, and Trajan's *Rescript*.

death. The "apology" emitted by Christians of that period was as it were an articulation of the voice which thus had been stifled by the "powers." It was in its nature like a "speech through the press," in defence of Christianity so prevented from defending itself in a fair trial, or, in defence of humanity, of the soul's right to be free, thus outraged by forceful unfairness; such a speech as the martyrs or confessors, if allowed "place for apology," might have orally delivered as a testimony before the judges or at the place of execution.

The central conception represented by the group of words, *confession*, *martyrdom*, *apology*, is not, reasoning on behalf of the religion, but, witness-bearing for it, *testimony* (which is the native meaning of the Greek *martyria*). In the Christian usage *martyria* came to have as its appropriate specific meaning, dying for the name or gospel of Christ. By "*martyr*" thus was meant, one who had sealed the testimony with his life's blood; while "*confessor*" meant one who, though escaping from the fiery trial with his life, yet (Jas. i. 12; cp. Rev. ii. 10) had earned "the crown of life" by "hazarding his life" in a persistent profession of this faith when brought before the prosecuting "powers." Thus in the great persecution, A.D. 177, of the churches of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul,<sup>1</sup> under "the philosopher" emperor, Marcus Aurelius, those who were about to die for Christ requested that the brethren should not speak of them as "martyrs," but only as "confessors," lowly and simple; because (they reasoned) the lofty name belongs appropriately to the lofty One (Rev. i. 5) who is "the faithful *martyr*"<sup>2</sup> and the first-begotten of the dead.

<sup>1</sup> Letter sent at the time to the Christians of Asia and Phrygia (see Acts xvi. 6; 1 Pet. i. 1; Rev. i. 11; Acts xviii. 23). The notable use it makes of *The Apocalypse* is one of the few external proofs of the genuineness of that book to be found in extant second century literature. Another of them is contributed by Irenæus (*Against Heresies*), the supposed writer of the Letter; who, at the time of the persecution a deacon in Vienne, had in his youth sat at the feet of Polycarp of Smyrna in "Asia" (cp. Rev. ii. 9 10). Yet a third proof, of considerably older date, was contributed by another Oriental, Syrian Justin Martyr, whose *Debate with Typho the Jew* is understood to represent a real discussion, held at Ephesus in "Asia" (cp. Rev. ii. 1, etc.).

<sup>2</sup> Greek for witness.

They knew that the lofty One Himself had not disdained the crown ascribed to Him at Rev. i. 5. In addressing a lukewarm Asian church (Rev. iii. 14), He, as if in order to create a soul beneath her ribs of death, had Himself assumed that crown by describing Himself as "the Amen, the faithful and true *martyr* ('witness'), the beginning of the creation of God." But (cp. Rev. ii. 10) He did not refuse to share this crown with "faithful" Christians. One of them He described (Rev. ii. 13) as "my faithful martyr," and (Rev. xi. 3, 7) "my two *martyrs*" ("witnesses") was His description of those who, faithful among the faithless at a foreseen time of general apostasy, were to testify against the beast-power of worldliness in the Church. Christians from the beginning have never as a class gone to the Lyonesse heroic extreme of renouncing the lofty name. Long before *The Apocalypse* was written, the description "*Thy martyr*" (Acts xxii. 20) had been employed by an apostle, in an address to the throned Christ Himself, with reference to him who is historically known to Christians as "the *protomartyr*" of their religion. And the Hebrew Christians (Heb. xii. 1) recognised "a great cloud of *martyrs*" ("witnesses") in the suffering hero saints of the Old Testament.

Though the meaning of *martyr*, as natively simply "witness" in the sense of *testifier* (not *spectator*), is exemplified in New Testament use (e.g. at Matt. xviii. 16 and 1 Pet. v. 1), yet in the New Testament the word has already come to be the chosen one for designation of a witness who has been "slain for the word of God." Thus (Acts xxii. 20) Stephen is a martyr in that specific sense. Christ Himself, where spoken of as "the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth," is in the same breath (Rev. i. 5) described as the one "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." In the two places (Rev. ii. 13, xi. 3, 7) where He speaks of Christians as His "witnesses," He represents them as having been "*slain*." And presumably the *Hebrew* description of the ancient heroes of the faith as "witnesses" (Heb. xii. 1) has in it a reference, not only to their having lived a witnessing life (Isa. xliii. 10), but also (Heb. xi. 32-38, xii. 4) to their having, characteristically of their long, illustrious



line, been exposed to fiery trials of testimony, even unto death.

The Greek for "*confession*" in our version is there sometimes rendered "profession" (*e.g.* at Heb. iii. 1, iv. 14). It is capable of a meaning so vague as—say, with reference to a person or a doctrine—simply intimation or declaration (Matt. vii. 23), perhaps with a certain solemnity of protestation. But (Rom. x. 9, 10) the theological apostle employs it with specific reference to the fundamentally vital action of man's true life in acknowledgment of God the Saviour. He also (1 Tim. vi. 13) raises it to the utmost conceivable height of solemn impressiveness in declaration by placing the "good confession," which Christ "witnessed before Pontius Pilate," on the same level of inviolable sacredness with the being of the living God, the sovereign fountain of all creature life in the universe. And by Christ Himself (Luke xii. 8, 9) the expression, with its converse, is invested with a uniqueness as of tragic dignity and grandeur in setting it apart for denotation of the two actions, respectively, of Christians in either owning or disowning Him at the testing time before men, and of the Son of Man in correspondingly either owning or disowning them, at the final judgment, "before the angels of God."

In His own "good confession," He declared (John xviii. 37) that *witness-bearing* for "the truth" was a great purpose of His incarnation and coming into the world. We know (Matt. xxvi. 63–66) that in His case witness-bearing culminated in martyrdom. But (Jas. i. 12; cp. Rev. ii. 10) the faithful confessor may receive the crown that is appropriately for martyrdom, though he should not be called to undergo the martyr's death. His action may have in it the moral worth of martyrdom, as well as its evidential value. Hence, in the later "period of the persecutions," *the confessors*, having escaped with life after "hazarding their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," came to be so held in honour by the Church as to constitute a sort of higher order of Christians: a lifelong distinction, on account of one past action, which ultimately came to be perilous to the general interest of orderly administration in the Church, and which, perhaps, in its tendency never was natively conducive to prosperity of

graces accompanying humility in "the confessors" themselves.

2. A Christian use of the words "*lapsed, apostate, traitor.*" Though somewhat remote from the central field of our proposed inquiry, the usage now to be considered by us is in that general region; and is so within its horizon that our present exercise on use of words will, in the line of similar exercises preceding, carry us down historically, in "the period of the persecutions," to that point where, at the opening of the fourth century (A.D. 312), Christianity is seen emerging from those persecutions in a Christian's accession to the imperial throne (cp. Rev. xi. 15). This may suitably close the present Introduction, through rounding into completeness a kind of preliminary survey of that region of time in which we have really been engaging.

What the usage brings particularly to view is, the primitive Christian feeling relatively to *loyalty, moral* trueness (1 Cor. v. 7, 8) in conscience toward God, faithfulness to Christ, as tested by the fiery trials (1 Pet. i. 7, iv. 12-19) *in connection with religious profession*. In Scripture Stephen and Christ are described as *faithful* martyrs; and Christ spoke of Himself from heaven as *the faithful and true* martyr, after He had in the days of His flesh laid great solemnity of emphasis on truth,—"*the truth,*"—as being essential in the witness-bearing for which He came down from heaven to dwell among us here. Truth may in a sense be matter merely of the intellect or natural reason—a sense in which it will not be made light of except by idiots; but of the "*faithfulness* that is crowned in Christian martyrdom the distinctively *moral* trueness is what constitutes the specific nature or characteristic essence. Moral veraciousness can have place and power in the otherwise rational or intellectual action or habit of receiving and keeping truth" (John vii. 17; cp. v. 39-41). But there may be a sort of surface receiving of the truth, where moral trueness is fatally wanting.<sup>1</sup> And (Luke viii. 13) a grand effect of such trials as those of the persecuting times is, to illustrate the vital indispensableness of inward "*sincerity and truth*" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8) by *making persistent open profession a testing proof of reality of conscience toward God*.

<sup>1</sup> Parable of the Sower; cp. John ix. 39.

In our day, profession, often lightly made, also is often made light of; and, being made light of, may without much compunction be shrunk from "in time of temptation," or so evaded that sometimes a nominal apology for religion really is effective repudiation or betrayal of it. The depth and strength of primitive Christian feeling toward such disloyalty is what, in the use of words now in question, comes into view as, *by contrast*, illustrating true Christian loyalty of conscience toward God and faithfulness to Christ. Our illustrations are found near the middle of the third century and near the opening of the fourth.<sup>1</sup>

*Lapsed, apostate.*—In the North African Church (Cyprian: *Works and Life*) professing Christians who had "lapsed"<sup>2</sup> from profession, or become openly "apostate"<sup>3</sup> from the religion, under terror of the fiery trials, were found seeking restoration to Church fellowship. Whereupon it was not proposed by any one that the restoration should be granted without a protracted previous process of painfully humiliating penitential discipline. But many strong Christians, especially confessors, stood out for the view, that no man who, after once professing Christianity, shrinks at the testing time from openly confessing Christ, ought ever again to be owned as a Christian brother in the communion of the faithful. The strength of their feeling of this view was evidenced by that formidable Novatian "schism"<sup>4</sup> which at one time threatened a disruption of the Christian Church.

An *evasion*, that had been perpetrated by some of the lapsed, further illustrated loyalty by contrast. These were called *libellatici* ("certificated" men), in reference to a certificate (*libellus*) which had saved them from the pains and perils of Christian profession. It was granted by the imperial officers, to the effect of certifying that the bearer had recanted—disowned or renounced that profession. And the evasion on the part of some Christians, who in fact had not recanted, consisted in this, that they escaped through benefit of the certificate of recantation, which they had somehow obtained though *they had not qualified* for it. Of course the *libellati* were morally and spiritually in the same condemnation as the openly lapsed:—with an aggravation of mean dishonesty, as if a minister should

<sup>1</sup> What here follows is considerably a reproduction from the present writer's work, *The Revelation and the Record*.

<sup>2</sup> Latin for *slidden away*.

<sup>3</sup> Ecclesiastical Greek for *deserter*.

<sup>4</sup> Greek for *split*.



hold himself not under ordination obligations to the Church's creed because he somehow—*e.g.* through collusion with an official—has managed not to sign her ordination *formula* of adherence to the creed.

*Traitor.*—The Diocletian persecution, aiming at extirpation or complete suppression of Christianity in the world-empire, had as peculiar feature an imperial command—suggested by a “philosopher”—that Christians, under penalty of death, should give up (*tradere*) their copies of the sacred books of the religion—their “Scriptures”—to be destroyed. This proceeded on the view, that Christianity among mankind stands or falls with the Bible—a view still held by worldly-minded philosophers as well as by spiritual-minded Christians. Those who obeyed the command became known as *traditores*.<sup>1</sup> For their offence of unfaithfulness to God in relation to His written Word, they were dealt with by the Church as previously the lapsed or apostate had been dealt with for unfaithfulness relatively to the Incarnate Word (see Rev. vi. 9, xx. 4; cp. xvii. 17).

And in the case of this legal *treason*, as previously in the case of apostasy or lapsing, there came to light an *evasion* which illustrates Christian loyalty—“upright, downright, and straightforward”—by contrast. Some of the traitors pleaded, in extenuation if not justification, that the books *they* had given up were *not Scriptures*—sacred writings—but only common books, which the imperial officials took for Scriptures;<sup>2</sup> or again, that what they had given up were only those *minor Scriptures*—*e.g.* 2 *Peter*, *James*, *Jude*, 2 and 3 *John*—which are intrinsically of insignificant importance, while (said the traitors) there is a cloud or haze of lingering doubt on the subject of their apostolic authorship. This occasioned a very important inquiry on the Church's part regarding the Canon of New Testament Scripture. But what made the scandal of disloyalty in the evasion was, the false face of appearing to give up the word of God: as if a professedly Christian teacher, accused of preaching infidelity, should plead, that he had only pretended to do so (Jer. vi. 13, 14).

Relatively to Pilate's question regarding truth, the case of those “traitors” is interesting as bringing into view an allegation of “honest doubt”—to justify dishonest action, or

<sup>1</sup> The Latin of our “traitors”; the Greek for the crime of *Judas* has the same literal meaning.

<sup>2</sup> Clavers' dragoons—not being subtle theologians—are satisfied with abjuration of any “covenant.”

extenuate the dishonesty. The doubt, however sincere, could not whitewash insincerity and untruth, which (1 Cor. v. 7, 8; cp. John viii. 46; Rev. xxi. 8, 27) is a violence to the innermost life of this religion. But<sup>1</sup> it is remarkable that historically, on the great occasions of really testing trial, mere intellectual doubt, speculative indecision of the judgment, does not appear, to any appreciable extent, to have had anything to do with lapsing, apostasy, treason. Neither the faithful, nor the disloyal themselves, appear to have thought of other than moral and spiritual influences of worldliness (1 John ii. 19) as accounting for failure in the matter of witness-bearing for the truth in peril. It might thus appear that, as a rule, what is really tested in the life-history of this religion on the trying occasions is, not mere intellectual force or expertness, but *moral trueness* (Ps. cxii. 4), loyalty of heart (Ps. xv. 1, 2),—while correspondingly, living knowledge of the truth, real operative apprehension of it as the seed and food of life, is given to the true-hearted (Luke viii. 10, 15; John xviii. 37, xiv. 22-24; 2 Cor. iv. 3-6).

## BOOK I.

### APOLOGETICS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY.

THE burden of our history here is, relatively to the two great ministries respectively of Christ and of His apostles,<sup>2</sup>—Did He, did they, *apologise*, or in any way deal with the matter of apologetics? And if He or they did, then how, or to what effect? What relative instruction is there, in His or their teaching or practice, for us “on whom (it may be said in this relation) the ends of the world are come”?

But here there is a previous question—as to source of information—regarding which it may be desirable for us to come to some finding before going into those particulars of inquiry,—namely, in order to our throughout the inquiry proceeding upon solid ground, a question—

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Greek for *emissaries*; cp. Heb. iii. 1.

*Regarding History of the two great Ministries which  
are to be here considered.*

Professor Huxley, who claims to employ "weapons of precision" in his inquiries in this region, has, in support of his contention that there is no sin in not believing in or on Christ (cp. John xvi. 9, iii. 18-21), asserted that we have no real means of trustworthy information about Christ and His teaching or work. Now, if we have no such means of information about Christ and His work, is it not for us a vain thing to inquire about His apologetics; and indeed about the apologetics of the apostles, since they profess to have derived their doctrines and their powers all *from Him*? Is there not for us a cloud or haze preventing vision over the whole field of the two great ministries, like that which the fourth century traitors saw over the human authorship of some minor Scriptures? And in this uncertainty regarding realities of the history, would it not be idle for us to inquire as to its apologetics? Such is the previous question, which here may be profitably allowed to give us pause.

Here, as before, we are confronted with a cloud at the threshold; but here, too, the cloud may pass away when the matter is fairly looked at.

1. *The authenticity of gospel history* may be provisionally assumed by us, as matter of present-day knowledge, established quite sufficiently for our information as to the teaching and practice of Christ and His apostles with reference to the proof of religion. It is true that Professor Huxley does not believe this. He holds that the present-day ascertainment of most advanced biblical scholarship are represented by such old masters as Baur and Strauss, whose Tübingen school was virtually closed a generation ago, and whose critical theories now survive only as wandering echoes, perhaps taken upon hearsay by would-be well-informed men who really are ignorant. Here the professor's "weapons of precision" are ludicrously absent, like the panoply of Don Quixote. Instead of antiquated theories to the effect that the Gospels and other New Testament Scriptures are mainly forgeries late in the second century, let us listen, say, to Renan, the most recent of the grand masters of scepticism



with reference to primeval Christianity. He assures us, *e.g.*, that discourses reported in *Matthew* are self-evidently Christ's own, and is willing to own that *Mark* is in substance the story of Peter declaring what he saw and heard in personal attendance on Christ, as also that *Luke*, and in substance *Acts*, are presumably the work of Paul's companion Luke. Here, then, if we will believe the latest of the leaders of "learned unbelief," there is quite sufficient means of information for our purpose. For instance, as to Christ's own proof of religion, there is here authentic information of His having professed to work miracles in attestation of His being from God, and having appealed to evidence of prophecy in claiming to be the Messiah: so that Renan has to make Him an impostor;—as also Strauss at last had to do on the same account, abandoning his mythic theory as untenable.

2. *The genuine Pauline authorship of the four great theological Epistles—Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians*—is admitted as "unquestionable" even by Professor Huxley's antiquated Tübingen masters, as well as by Renan. These Epistles are the doctrinal manifesto of primeval Christianity. And about their genuineness there is not—broadly speaking—except in some cases of mere extravagant eccentricity, any question among real biblical scholars, whether believers or unbelievers: the only relative question that there can be among sane men is, not between belief and unbelief, but between real knowledge and mere ignorance. Now, in the light of these Epistles (of date A.D. 57 to A.D. 60), "unquestionably" Pauline apostolic, it is perfectly clear, as mere historical matter of fact, as to proof of religion,—that the apostles, while placing great reliance on the internal evidence of the excellences of the religion itself in the substance of it, also claimed for it an external evidence, of Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ, of His resurrection showing Him to be the Son of God, and of miracles done by the apostles themselves, in attestation of their mission as God's ambassadors to mankind regarding the gospel of His kingdom in that Son:—all this, in representative regions of the whole Roman "world" (Luke ii. 1), within half a lifetime of the personal ministry of Christ on earth. What further

information regarding the apostolic ministry could we, for the purpose of our present inquiry, reasonably expect or seek? But,—

3. The main point for us here is that, in order to profitable fruitful inquiry as to the apologetics of Christ and His apostles, *we do not need even to suppose or assume the authenticity of New Testament Scripture history.* Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Tübingen theorising was right in making the New Testament Scriptures as a class to have been second century forgeries, and also that there were no “unquestionable” Epistles of Paul. Still, neither the Tübingen school, nor any other school of real knowledge, has any real doubt of the fact, that *before the close of that century* the new Scriptures now on our canon, and only these, were held in the bosom of the Christian community as genuine writings of the apostles and their authorised associates.

Consequently it is a simply indisputable historical fact that, *e.g., those second century Christians believed* the gospel history which we now have in *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.* Hence in these Scriptures we have demonstrably correct information as to what the second century Christians *believed to have been* the apologetics of Christ and His apostles in the first century. And as the Christians of the second and all subsequent centuries have held those Scriptures as a divine rule of faith and practice, it follows that, in ascertaining the New Testament apologetics, we come to know—what surely is well worth all the labour of thus learning it, namely—*what Christians in the second century and ever since have held as a divinely given model and prescription* for their guidance relatively to defence of Christianity by reasoning,—have held as the *principia* of the apologetics of their religion, as delivered in the two great ministries of its founders.

4. Further, *we have independent means of trustworthy information in the Old Testament.* The New Testament in our hands is, in its representations regarding the personal career of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom, on the face of it a history and exposition of the “fulfilment” of the Old. It is simply a fact, that can be seen by any reader, that the Old Testament Messiahism exhibits, in the form of adumbra-

tion and prediction, what the New Testament sets forth as realised in the religion of Jesus, so that His "Christianity" is the historical counterpart of that prophetic Messiahism. And though the New Scriptures should not have come into existence until after the first century, certainly the Old Scriptures were in existence before it. They existed at least two centuries before it,—witness their being then extant in a Greek translation. Though the New Testament information regarding the first century should be for us only as the cloud-concealed bridge-way in Mirza's vision, yet a light shines for us on that way from Old Testament adumbration and prediction, exhibiting the (future) history of Messiah's earthly career.

Not only the New Scriptures, though they should all be forgeries, clearly show what in every century since the first has always been the belief of Christians regarding Christ and His apostles in that beginning; the Old Testament also makes clear what, previous to that beginning, and down to A.D. 30 (Matt. xi. 13), had for long ages (see ver. 2) been Israel's expectation regarding the "coming" Christ and His work. And though the Old Scriptures, too, should have originated in forgery ("methinks he doth forge too much"), still their *existence* at the opening of the first century is an undoubted fact. The fact of their existence was notorious as matter of literary history—witness the Septuagint translation—for centuries before the birth of Christ. And the Scriptures thus existing, as the sacred books of Israel's religion, contained *the Old Testament Christianity*. That is to say, they exhibited, in the form of types and predictions, the *expectation* of Israel regarding Messiah, His work, His manner of proceeding in the establishing of His kingdom. Now, that will enable us to form a reasonable judgment as to what presumably *must have been* the apologetics of Christ and His apostles,—their manner of seeking to found His religion. For,—

In seeking to found His religion, they presumably must have endeavoured to conform to the Old Testament representation of Messiah's manner of working for the establishment of His kingdom, so as in this way to meet the Israelitish expectation of "Him that should come" in the fulness of the times. Thus, in the palmy early days of his mythical theoris-



ing, even Strauss, in order to find a seed from which a mythical history of Jesus could grow up in the supposed hotbed of primeval Christian imagination, had to seek that seed in the *fact* that Israel expected a Messiah who should work miracles, in fulfilment of prophecy and manifestation of His own glory. In which case,—Jesus of Nazareth claiming to be Jehovah's Christ,—*must* He not presumably have professed to work miracles, and fulfil prophecy, by way of proving His religion? Finally,—

5. Yet further, *the character* of the Scriptures, and of the ministries, would bear them witness though we otherwise had been ignorant of their history. Suppose that the Old Testament had not existed for us, and that the Christian belief of the second and subsequent centuries regarding the New Scriptures had not been heard of by us. For us the said Scriptures would thus be—like the recently excavated Assyrian inscriptions—a discovery of to-day. Even in that case the record might bear internal evidence of historical reality, such as would leave no doubt in the minds of men of sense that what we here have is a real history of the earthly career of Jesus of Nazareth and His apostles; and the way in which they are here represented as setting about the proof of religion might to such minds, by its *reasonableness*, go to show that the history is real. It is not irrational to suppose that in actual experience, by this very process, without men's being distinctly aware of it, the Scriptures and the ministries are, in myriads of hearts and homes, continually approving themselves as true and divine.

For the ulterior purpose of our inquiry in the present book, it may not be unprofitable, by way of sample exercise on that testing character of reasonableness, here to pause for a little on a matter that has an interest of its own, in making the following—

NOTES on Professor Huxley re the swine miracle (Matt. viii., Mark v., Luke viii.).—Here again there is on the professor's part a notable absence of his "weapons of precision," as<sup>1</sup> there was in his proposed proof of evolution from a palæon-

<sup>1</sup> *Nature*, June 21, 1883.

tological fact, of natural history of the nautilus, which<sup>1</sup> was promptly shown to be not a fact, but the opposite, and would not have proved evolution though it had been fifty times a fact. But absence of precision on his part need not make the present exercise unprofitable for our purpose.

1. His view ("as a scientist") regarding "nature" implies that miracle is *absolutely* impossible: his view that "nature" is *absolutely* all of course implies that there absolutely cannot be anything *supernatural*.<sup>2</sup> And (1) in holding such a view he is not a true scientist, but only an atheistic metaphysician (cp. Matt. xix. 26). Science does not teach that miracle ("extraordinary supernatural" work) is absolutely impossible; but only assumes that it is naturally impossible,—as of course it is, otherwise it were no true "miracle" (*wonder*). Science thus does not bid men regard incarnation or redemption as a monstrous thing like "a centaur in Piccadilly." (2) What is more directly to the present purpose,—*his* (untrue) scientism is a disqualification on his part for fairly judging as to the historical reality of the swine miracle. The man who is prepossessed with a "scientific" conviction that a thing is absolutely impossible,—is he in a mental condition for fairly estimating historical evidence adduced in proof that the thing is a fact? It was the same presupposition, of the absolute impossibility of miracle, that occasioned the now demonstrated blindness (John ix. 39) of the so-called "historical" criticism of the Tübingen school with reference to gospel history (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4).

2. He contends that this particular miracle is *morally* impossible, as involving violence to right of private property,—which, he holds, *could not* be perpetrated by Christ. The character of Christ he professedly holds in deepest reverence; so as to be hotly indignant if it be said or implied that he (the professor) deems it not a sin not to believe Christ (as distinguished from not believing *in* Christ or *on* Him). But (1) would not such a Christ as his argument here implies—one *incapable* of wrong-doing (so *utterly* that the gospel story *must* be false)—be a *miracle* of manhood: which the professor, "as a scientist," holds to be absolutely impossible? (2) How does Professor Huxley come to revere so deeply the character of Christ? seeing that generally our having no trustworthy means of information about Christ is the very foundation of the professor's

<sup>1</sup> Pattison in *Transactions* of the Victoria Institute, April 7, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> In his eulogistic appropriation of Hume's reasoning about miracle (Essay on *Hume*), he essentially *mistakes* Hume, who, like Mr. Stuart Mill, knew better than to make miracle *absolutely* impossible. His position was only, that it is in the highest degree improbable, *so as* to be *morally* impossible.

proof that it is no sin not to believe on Him; and particularly, to show that the Gospels, our only extant source of real information regarding the earthly career of Christ, are not trustworthy in their testimony as to fact, is the very purpose of the professor's argument about the swine miracle? *Whence*, then, has he his knowledge of that character of Christ which he so profoundly reverences?

3. In his endeavour to discredit the Gospels, he essentially misrepresents their narrative. This on his part is not mere clumsy blundering absence of "precision." In such a case, it is a grave delinquency. It affects not only the logic of his argument, but its moral trueness. In all decent fairness, one who adversely criticises a gospel narrative is bound to represent the matter of it as the Gospels present it. And with reference to the purpose of this criticism, namely, testing the trustworthiness of the whole gospel history by this as a sample case, the moral as well as logical obligation is here peculiarly stringent. Yet true it is and of verity, that here there is misrepresentation to the effect of turning, against the scriptural foundation of Christian belief in God, a narrative which in itself is fitted for supporting that belief. The narrative itself is regarding *the Saviour Son of God*, in a work intended to serve a saving divine purpose toward mankind. The misrepresentation makes it appear as if the thing narrated had been an isolated and unauthorised action of *a merely private individual man*, such as (the professor intimates) would be meetly rewarded by a magistrate's casting the perpetrator into prison. That we do not here misapprehend the matter, may appear as follows:—

Suppose that the Gadarenes (or Gerasenes?) could lawfully hold property in swine; or, that in any case it would be wrong for a merely private individual man to destroy the swine,—as it would be, say, to blight a neighbour's fig-tree without his permission, or to kill his firstborn of Egypt. That is nothing to the purpose of Professor Huxley's argument, *except on the view* that Christ in this working is a merely private individual man. Now, *is He so in the gospel narrative?* Do the narrators, here or elsewhere, expressly or by implication, make Him to be in this working merely a private individual human being? On the contrary, all three of them, from the outset, with great impressiveness, make Him throughout His career to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. i. 1, 21–23; Mark i. 1; Luke i. 35; cp. Matt. xvi. 16–20). Nevertheless their critic, in an avowed endeavour to make them false witnesses concerning God, falsifies their testimony; appearing to comment on what they say, while really putting an essentially different



thing in place of it, and moralising, or otherwise commenting, on *that* (cp. his "fact" as to the nautilus).

4. Relatively to *the root question here*,—regarding Christ Himself personally,—Professor Huxley's procedure is arbitrary and irrational. It is logically weak and incoherent in a measure far from creditable to that "scientism" of which he is a popular expositor. A Christ whom he so profoundly reverences must in his view at least have some substantive reality of existence. He cannot be, in the critic's own view, a mere figment of the critic's own imagination. The Christ who was so unflinchingly just, that a swine miracle would be morally impossible for Him, must in some way be historically real. Now *the only real Christ ever heard of* among mankind *professed to work miracles*, and claimed to be the Saviour Son of God. If, then, according to Professor Huxley's view of "nature," miracle be absolutely impossible, what does he mean, what *can* he mean, by resenting the ascription to him of holding it not a sin not to believe Christ? Does *he* believe, or pretend to believe, Christ professing to work miracles, to fulfil prophecies, to be the Son of God? On the other hand, if Christ really was not a "deceiver" (see Matt. xxvii. 63), if He was what He claimed to be,—then He is Lord of all, to whom belong the earth and its fulness, so that the cattle on a thousand hills are His; and to speak of any conceivable creature right of property as here limiting and barring out *His* right of universal suzerainty, is a mere crass futility, like speaking of a glow-worm's extinguishing the sun.

But, *on the view* that here He is only a private individual man, to speak about imprisonment for violation of neighbourly right of property is to betray utter incomprehension of the matter in question here. On this view that supposed offence would be mere insignificance of peccadillo in comparison with the vast wickedness of the whole career, in its persistent impious imposture, rising to a supreme of criminal audacity in the last cry from the cross. It is no wonder that the high priest, *not believing Him* on His oath, rent his clothes and solemnly declared Him worthy of death (Mark xiv. 61-64). *Does Professor Huxley believe* it was mere man that swore most solemnly, that He was "the Christ, the Son of the blessed"? If he do not, then why speak of a private right of property as making it wrong in Him to work His will on creatures? If he do, then what can be the meaning of his so profoundly reverencing "that deceiver"? Even the swine-owners at least had *a meaning* when they entreated Christ to leave their countryside. Is it possible that Professor Huxley has not a meaning when he speaks of utterly believing Christ? Is it an

office of "scientism" to make men speak nonsense about Christ in the interest of infidelity or atheism?

#### CHAP. I. APOLOGETICS IN THE EARTHLY MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

What we here have in view is distinct from what may be spoken of as apologetics of gospel history. Apologetics of gospel history may mean (John i. 31; 1 John i. 3) apologetics constituted by the gospel history itself, as furnishing ground for men's believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And presumably (2 Pet. i. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 3-8, iii. 8-15) this in effect is the ground of belief that primarily was laid alike before Jews and Gentiles (see Acts ii. 14-36, x. 34-43) by the apostles in their initial work of founding God's kingdom among men. At this hour, simple presentation of that history, of the works and words of Jesus of Nazareth, is everywhere and among all classes found in experience to be the most effective apologetics,—or, means of leading men to belief in the Bible religion, and establishing them in the faith of it. The evidence of Christianity thus constituted or furnished by the gospel history, we will not now inquire into under the head of "apologetics in the earthly ministry of Christ."

What we are about to inquire into is only, in His ministry *as teacher*,—in His inaugural individual defensive propaganda,—*His manner of dealing with the matter of proof of religion*. There will thus be excluded from our consideration of gospel history,—in the first instance,—not only the great evangelical fundamentals of His incarnation and redemption, but also various other essential aspects of His person and work (John xvi. 14) in connection with which it may be seen (cp. Eph. ii. 20) that "Jesus Christ Himself" is "the chief corner-stone" of apologetics as well as of the general Bible system of religion. Heads of evidence in gospel history that is thus excluded from our present consideration are, *e.g.*, the following:—1. *The moral perfection of Jesus*—His "sinlessness"—regarded as involving a new supernatural beginning of manhood in His person (see Luke xxiii. 47; cp. Matt. xxvii. 54), with (Matt. i. 21-23), a promise of new creation of humanity through the coming of such a Son of Man.—

2. *The whole conception of His career*—"Plan of Jesus"—as reaching through incarnation and redemption to that regeneration of mankind now dead in sin: this, say, in its correspondency, not only to the Messianic hope of the Old Testament, but also to (John xii. 20) the longings or wants of that lost mankind;—as these may be seen, *e.g.*, in the religions of heathenism, and are illustrated by facts in general history of the moral and spiritual condition of man's race.—3. *That view of the whole system of things*—in the condition, history, and thence presumable destination, not only of man, but of "the earth and the world"—which underlies the gospel representation of the mission of Jesus Christ the Lord (Luke ii. 11): this, say, as compared with otherwise known facts regarding the actual condition and history of that system, and with non-Christian speculations regarding it.

From inquiry into such matters in 'connection with gospel history we will now deliberately refrain. From the comprehensive investigations into which that inquiry would draw us we of set purpose turn aside,—in order to undivided full concentration of our attention for the present on the one matter of *the Saviour's personal teaching in its bearing on the subject of apologetics*,—or on the question, Did He "apologise," or otherwise deal as teacher with that subject? And if He did, then, how?

In its bearing on apologetics His teaching presents two aspects of instructiveness, under which we shall now consider it.—1. There is (Luke xii. 5–12, etc.) a very special *introduction to apologetics* in His teachings with reference to witness-bearing—to confession, with possibility of martyrdom, and culmination in *apology* ("answer"). And,—2. there is *His own apologetic practice*,—His production of evidence of the truth of His religion, or exhibition of proofs, or appeal to the proofs, of His being from God. Here, too, we must practise exclusion, even of things intrinsically or otherwise most interesting and important, for the sake of concentration on the one subject-matter of our inquiry here and now. Under each of these two aspects of the Saviour's teaching there appear things in it, of intrinsically greatest importance, which, in order to success in what ought here and now to be our one endeavour of inquiring, we must either exclude from our view, or look at

only in their connection with doctrine as to the proof of religion. It might even be said that the question for us at every point has now to be, not, What is the value of this or that as proof of Christianity? but, How does it bear on the theory of apologetics,—the science or practice of that proof? What does the great Teacher ("Master" at John xiii. 13, 14, etc.) here expound or exemplify as to the manner in which that proof may be rightly contemplated and gone about? What has the Lord thus or otherwise ordained, regarding either the sources and grounds of Christian evidence to be adduced by us, or the spirit and method of adducing it?

SEC. 1. *His Introduction to Apology* (in such teachings as at Luke xii. 1-12).

It may help us toward the desired concentration on the one point of our inquiry here and now, if we look at the matter here set forth in the light of its environment. And for our purpose a suitable point of view may be found through our mentally placing ourselves beside a professing Christian who, when there is occasion or call for his "giving a reason" of the Christian hope (1 Pet. iii. 15), straightway (Luke xiv. 18) "begins to make excuse,"—*e.g.* in the strain of pleading, that he is not of a martial temper or combative disposition, as some men are (Luke xviii. 11), but a quiet follower of the Prince of Peace, hating "strife of tongues," and deeming that, after all, a good life is the best apology for religion.

To which it might be answered,—Excuse in place of obedience is in such a case disobedience aggravated by hypocritical insult (cp. Acts v. 3). Were Justin Martyr and Tertullian leading a bad life in hazarding their lives as apologists for this religion? Had it not been said before their time, "Curse ye Meroz; because they came not to the help of the Lord, the help of the Lord against the mighty"? May it not be a delusive self-indulgence,—a blinding worldliness of soft unmanly selfishness,—that makes a capable man *do* nothing, but snivel about a good life, when the call is to the fiery front of battle: *instead of* standing in the breach, for the rescue or defence, where the heart's life of the kingdom is in peril, perhaps with traitors within the city or the citadel, and enemies openly storming in upon and through broken walls?



"Be not deceived, God is not mocked"; and the true confessors will disown the Vicar of Bray.

We now look at the matter as exhibited by "the faithful witness" in such utterances as at Luke xii. 5-12. Simply to look at this passage, pausing reverently (Ex. iii. 5) in contemplation of what appears in it, as in a Bush that burneth unconsumed,—this, if we duly remember who it is that speaks here, is itself an education, as of novitiate, for apologetics,—were it only through its introducing us into the true central point of view for contemplation of the subject. Here at ver. 12, and in the parallel utterance at Luke xxi. 14, we mark the place that is given to *apology*.<sup>1</sup> It is expressly placed, by Christ, *at the highest point* of testimony, in the culmination of that witness-bearing which appears in confession of Him, and may rise into martyrdom for His truth.

We observed<sup>2</sup> that *apologise* ("answer") in Luke's report of the Lord's relative utterances ought not to be pressed into a strict academic sense of apologetics. Taking the word in the free natural sense of, generally, "answer" to accusation or "defence" against crimination,—which may (1 Pet. iii. 15) consist in "giving a reason" of the Christian hope,—we now will dwell on the relative significance of the utterances in which the word occurs (namely, at Luke xii. 11 and xxi. 14), as revealing itself through the historical connection. And we begin with observing that, even at the first blush, though it should be looked at only from a distance, in this representation, while there is careful provision for the matter and manner of the apology—as it were, the body of apologetics—far more impressively what is made prominent, as the fundamentally vital thing in respect of real importance, is, *the heart and soul and spirit* of the apologising,—like a life divinely breathed into what otherwise is but animated clay.

This is represented most impressively by the direction, Luke xii. 11, 12 (R.V.), "Be not anxious how or what ye shall answer (*apologise*), or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." Here we witness the first appearance of apology by name in the annals of the new dispensation of God's kingdom among men. It is the King that here addresses "His

<sup>1</sup> "Answer"—on the word here, see above, p. 10.      <sup>2</sup> Above, p. 10.

friends," "His disciples first of all." He speaks of a *situation* of fiery trial (cp. 1 Pet. iv. 12, i. 7) in which they are to be placed through man's opposition to His cause. On account of their adherence to that cause, they are to be called into question, brought before the "powers" of an angry threatening world, which are "able to destroy the body." And in that situation, they are not to be simply passive, sitting still and doing nothing. Much less are they to be dumb if the good name of His religion be misrepresented or otherwise maligned. Least of all are they to deny Him, were it only (Matt. xii. 30) by a failure to confess Him which effectively is denying Him,—a silence giving consent to dishonouring His name. They are to stand up for Him, and speak out for Him—*apologising, pleading* His cause. And this they are to do in the Spirit: "the Holy Spirit shall teach you," wherefore "be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say."

About reliance on the Spirit's teaching Christ here speaks—"as His manner was"—without qualification. He simply makes His *point* here,—leaving qualifications, if needed, to come in due place and time of need. For instance, what He here says about making no previous preparation for apologising, does it apply to such a case as ours? That may depend on the question, whether *the situation* in which we are providentially called to the answering is the same as that which He had immediately in view. *The case* here in His view is *the extreme* case,—in which it is that a principle is thoroughly tried: namely, the case of His followers in deadly perils of raging persecution. In that case, a Christian might well be solicitous,<sup>1</sup> in fear that the good cause might come to be clouded through lack of preparedness on his part, confusing perturbation of his mind, mere failure of his nerve—as when the disciples all forsook the Master and fled. *For such an emergency*, a Christian may rely on the promised prompting of the Holy Spirit, *in place of* the preparation that in other circumstances would be in his own power. But in our ordinary case, where there is no such emergency, to neglect

<sup>1</sup> The Lyonnese martyrs requested their brethren to pray for them, that they might be enabled to glorify God by the manner of their dying for His truth.

the labour of attaining to attainable qualification for answering when call arises, under the name of relying on the promised aid of the Spirit, would be to show, not the true faith of a Christian, but rather the lazy presumption of a hypocrite.

Still, it is in that extreme case, of emergency most fiercely trying, that we most clearly see the *point*,—as to that heavenly teaching of apology. “His disciples first of all,” then immediately in view, may have been the apostles-elect: who by this time had received some inaugural experience of evangelistic labour, through probationary trials of preaching in a preparatory mission He had sent them on. That experience may have led them to look forward with peculiar anxiety to the possible occurrence of emergent calls for apology: in case of which a man, though resolute in confessing Christ, and ready (Acts xxi. 13) to be bound or even to die for His name, yet might not be prepared so to “answer” or apologise as not to bring dishonour on that name. What, for instance, if, through strangeness and sudden terrors of emergency, there had been an apologetic failure on the part of Peter at the great Pentecost, or of Paul addressing the Jerusalem Jewish multitude, or Festus and Agrippa in their array of temporal dominion! It is worth noting that here, *the earliest recorded promise of inspiration to apostles*—if such it be—had pointed reference to apology alone: on which account, were it only on this account, we shall do well to make a careful study of the *apostolic* apologetics.<sup>1</sup>

But the address, though it should in the first instance be peculiarly to those apostles-elect, has a comprehensive aspect toward all Christ’s followers, down to the world’s end: so long as there are oppositions to the gospel of the kingdom which are calls to the defence of it by “His friends.” Here we need not enter on any question, whether the forecast exhibited in the address, of the future experience of that kingdom among mankind, is not manifestly supernatural, such as to constitute for the gospel an evidence of fulfilled prophecy. Christ (John xv. 18) showed in His teaching, that thus far insight into the worldliness of mankind which is enmity against God would give a foresight of deadly oppositions to His cause, which natively (Heb. xii. 15, 16)

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 2nd below.

are fruits from such a root. And in the forecast of such oppositions, arising in the course of human history, He illustrates *the sacred importance* of Christian apology by ascribing it primarily to a special and extraordinary teaching of the Holy Ghost. No doubt, in that unconsumed burning Bush of testimony, it is the Spirit of grace, which is true life, that is the luminous flame, appearing in confession with readiness for martyrdom. But the apology, which is the articulate voice from that Bush, is the one thing here ascribed expressly to the Third Person of the Godhead.

It greatly adds to the impressiveness of this fact, to find in parallel utterances that, on all the occasions of His referring to such provision for emergent opposition, Christ signalised the sacred importance of apology by promising the sacred gift of speech as distinctly a divine gift; and yet more, that on the separate occasions respectively He ascribed the gift to, separately, *every one of the Persons of the adorable Trinity*. Thus, while here (Luke xii. 12) He says, "*the Holy Spirit* shall teach you in that same hour," on a previous occasion (Matt. x. 20) He brought into view the First Person as distinctly the bestower of the gift: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of *your Father* which speaketh in you"; and (Luke xxi. 14, 15; cp. 1 Pet. iii. 15) on the last recorded occasion of His referring to this matter, within two days of His death, He brought into view Himself, the Prince of Life, the Second Person of the Godhead, as the giver of apology: "Settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate beforehand what ye shall answer (*apologise*): for *I* will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (see a fulfilment at Acts vi. 10 and Acts vii.).

It is to be noted, further, that the two utterances in which the word *apologise* is found in gospel history occur in two most memorably great discourses of the Lord, which might be entitled His *two farewells*,—to the prevalently most esteemed religionism of Canaan in His day. 1. At Luke xii. 1–12 is recorded His *initial* farewell, when He had broken with the leaders of that religionism, the Pharisees and scribes; and,—2. in Luke xxi., and also in Matt. xxiv. and Mark xii., we have the record of His *final* farewell, on Olivet, apparently in



hearing of only some few selected disciples, in the last week of His life, after He had made His last appearance as a public teacher in the temple. These discourses were not addressed to those whom He thus had parted from; but to His "disciples" or "friends," who followed Him into the separation. And they have reference to the *future* that awaited His followers, in the times when He should have gone from them, and they should have come into painful experience of what (Matt. x. 38), in a world that hates Him because hating the Father, is involved in following Him truly as the Christ, the Son of God. It was then especially that there was to be call for apology as well as martyrdom: not only as a child can suffer, but actively playing the man for Christ and His religion by "giving a reason of its hope."

Here let us pause for a little on the side-question, *What is to be thought of Christ* as here appearing?—not only in His placing Himself between the First and the Third Persons of the Godhead, and most conspicuously on the judgment throne, but also and especially in His bearing toward men?—above all, toward "His own" disciples and friends? He foresees as inevitable that adherence to His religion shall bring vast and incalculable miseries—the direst evils that creatures can inflict or can innocently undergo—precisely on those followers who shall trust Him the most unreservedly, and serve Him the most fully and sincerely in devotedness of love. Yet He calls men into His religion. He plans and provides for men's being called into His religion in all nations through all generations. And He makes the sum and substance of it all to be—*Himself: Christ, equivalent to Christianity*, the religion of the living God! Apart from His here placing Himself on heaven's throne, between the Father and the Holy Ghost, how are we to account for the claim He here makes upon mankind,—not only to loving remembrance, but to worshipping service and sacrifice, including such endurance of evil for His name? A claim so vast, on the part of one so meek and lowly, so just and wise and loving,—*can it be accounted for except upon the view*, that He is the only Being in the universe entitled to make such a claim?

Apology may be gone about in a worldly spirit. So may preaching or prayer: not to speak of temporising silence *in the place of* earnestly contending for the faith. But the true original Preceptor of apologetics is (John xvi. 14; Luke xii. 12) the Holy Spirit of God the Father and the Son. There

is no more perfect picture of *unworldliness* than the delineation of apology by Christ in those two utterances, in which it first appears by name. And a crowning exaltation of its true nature, of spirituality, in the sacred history of His kingdom, is constituted by its being thus ordained of the King, "the faithful martyr" (Rev. i. 5), who in witness-bearing on the cross has left His people an example, that they should follow in His steps.

Comparing the particular contents of the two farewell discourses, we perceive that the first of them is that which bears most fully on our point of present inquiry. For all through it (Luke xii. 1-12) there is a continuous movement on and up to that point—of *apology*—as its culminating termination: while in the second of them (Luke xxi.) the utterance regarding apology (ver. 14) is not thus a finality crowning the whole, and the whole is not, as the first of them is, occupied only with the trials and the duties of Christ's own "friends." It reaches into "apocalyptic" forecastings of judgment, final and initial, on His enemies:—initial judgment, on Jerusalem and the holy nation on account of their not receiving the Messiah when He came to them; blending in prophetic vision with ulterior judgments, on the populations of the earth in connection with the coming of His kingdom among mankind. Even there it is remarkable that Christian apology should still appear in His forecast, like a "light in a dark place," as if "shining" amid chaotic dissolution of a world. We, however, for our present purpose, will now concentrate our attention on the subject as it appears in the first of those two farewell discourses of the Lord (Luke xii. 5-12).

This representation of it might as a whole be entitled, *The trial of the witnesses* (Isa. xliii. 10). The witnessing office of Christ's followers is here taken for granted. And *the situation*, of alarming "terror" (1 Pet. iii. 14), which is to be the outward instrument of trial, is regarded as inevitable through the wicked world's antipathy to God in the gospel. The specialty, on which attention thus is fixed, is the trial,—the action of the witnesses under trial, their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to trust, and the corresponding action toward

them on the part of the King and Redeemer<sup>1</sup> who has sent them on this mission of witness-bearing.

The discourse is distinctly the utterance of a King, invested with all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. xxviii. 18–20; cp. Acts i. 8). Its point is kingly direction from the Son of God, such as the servant Moses (Heb. iii. 6) delivered to Israel at the Jordan regarding the holy war for conquest of the promised land. And with reference to that *apology*, which He places on the summit of the witness-bearing, what He prescribes is, not only faithfulness in testimony, but in a fearless boldness amid all the alarming “terrors,” *a strange unearthly calm*, as of the light in a pharos tower, that shines immovable through all night storms, “not shaken by the thundering surges, nor quenched by the blinding spray” (cp. Phil. ii. 15, 16). The calm, which in the last of the two farewell discourses (Luke xxi. 19) He spoke of as a Christian self-possession of the soul in “patience” (that is, *persistent endurance*; cp. Heb. xii. 1, 2),—is most remarkably to be exhibited in the witness’s making *no preparation* for the apologising, not even so much as thinking about the matter beforehand,<sup>2</sup> but carefully, even of set purpose, to avoid *all thought* of so preparing for such emergency!

It was remarkably exemplified by martyrs and confessors in the first heroic age of persecutions, and often has been in later ages. It may remind classical scholars of the Horatian worldly wisdom of maintaining stable equanimity in troubles (*memento in adversis rebus æquam servare mentem*), or the Horatian composed fearlessness of virtue (*integer vitæ scelerisque purus*) in confronting people’s rage or tyrant’s frown. But here it is exhibited, not by select individuals, rare heroic souls under discipline of philosophy, but (1 Cor. i. 26, etc.) by a commonalty largely consisting of weak despised “things which are not.” So (Luke xxi. 13) it “shall turn unto them for a testimony.”<sup>3</sup> It is really wonderful. That self-

<sup>1</sup> “How could I,” said Polycarp, when put to the test of dying as His witness, “How could I deny Him, my Redeemer and King?”

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 14. Cp. as to “the extreme case,” above, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding Blandina the slave girl’s endurance of torture in martyrdom, it was said by the brethren, “God showed in her person that things which are despised by men are honourable before Him.”

possession of the Christian soul, the strange unearthly calm—as on Stephen's "angel" face, Acts vii.—in simple reliance on the invisible God, is it not a visible outshining of divine supernaturalism of light within the soul so tried and not found wanting?

Moses by faith "endured as seeing Him who is invisible." The thought of God—"the great *I am*"—as watching over the trial, ready to sustain the tried, sure to *punish* those who prove unfaithful at the testing time,—is here employed by Christ as means of maintaining His tried followers in the calm of a persistent faithfulness in confession which may rise into martyrdom, and be manifested very signally in right apologising. Here, too, we mark the continuous movement of representation rising in that climax. Not only, with a powerful distinctness, every one of the three adorable Persons, in whose name the witness was baptized, is now brought into separate view as a spectator of his action in the testing crisis:—an amazing appeal!—as compared with which Heb. xii. 1, 2 is feebleness, and Napoleon's allusion to "forty centuries" looking down upon his Frenchmen from hoary pyramids, is vulgar theatrical anti-climax. To every one of the divine Persons there is assigned a distinct aspect, of awfulness as well as guardian care: especially with a reference to God's mind regarding disloyalty, that is fitted, through prepossession of the mind and heart with rational fear of God, to forearm as well as to forewarn against ensnaring fear of man. And we note how all this—particularly *the terrific severity of threatening*—is, step by step, brought closer and closer to bear upon the case.

1. (Luke xii. 5-7) as to THE FATHER: to whom (2 Cor. xiii. 14) in the apostolic benediction corresponds "the love of God." He is here set forth as distinctively the object of a salutary "fear." It is true that His tender mercies are over all His works: so that His omnipresent providence is not regardless even where a sparrow drops lifeless on the ground. In particular, toward His children of mankind in Christ He has in Him a distinctively *parental* tenderness—that is, the utmost conceivable tenderness of care: "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Yea, His comforting parental tenderness (Isa. lxvi. 13) is dimly imaged in the doating mother, who numbers, one by one, the hairs on her helpless infant's head. So says, and shows, the only-begotten Son, who



is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared Him. Nevertheless, in the event of unfaithfulness in this matter of Christian confession, that "Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," is able—He has it in Him, witness Judas going "to his own place"—to cast both soul and body into hell. *This*, too, is declared—it is said and shown—by the Son of Man, the only-begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father.

2. (Luke xii. 8, 9) as to THE SON. The Second Person here appears, not as in "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," but (John v. 22, 27) as the One to whom "all judgment is committed, because He is the Son of Man." His placing Himself on the judgment throne, between God the Father and the divine Spirit, is here again equivalent to His claiming divinity of nature. But there is something peculiarly terrific in the representation of *His* turning away His face from us, on "the day of wrath, that dreadful day," refusing to countenance His professed followers who have not been faithful in confessing Him before men. It is in His person peculiarly that Christians at the trying times have realised the being of God the Redeemer: as when aged Polycarp<sup>1</sup> spoke of the impossibility of denying Him instead of giving his own body to the flames; and as when the Lyonnese confessors all but saw Him bodily present sustaining the martyrs in their agonies of torture unto death. Angels are only "ministers." The only Saviour near of kin to us is Christ the Lord. His countenance is the only hope of sinners on "the day of wrath" as at this hour. And if it be turned away from those who were driven by terrors of the "fiery trials,"—what of those who, under no such overmastering constraint, yet deny Him before men, either by silence where speech is called for, or by speech that puts a false Christ or "another" gospel<sup>2</sup> in the place of the true.

3. (Luke xii. 10–12) as to THE HOLY GHOST. The references to His relation to the matter correspond to the clause of benediction, "the communion of the Holy Ghost," in respect of representing as brought most intimately *home* to man (Luke xvii. 21) what (John i. 18) is natively invisible, in the bosom's counsel of the Father, and what in Christ His counsellor, a Son that is given to us, yet is high above us in the spiritual firmament as an ascended "Sun of Righteousness." The Spirit's relation to a soul's life is like that of the invisible atmosphere to the life of the body, as medium of its receiving the light and genial influences of the sun. We will not now dwell on the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 39, footnote.

<sup>2</sup> It is not vaguely "God" and "truth," but distinctly "*the truth*," *the faith*," Christ and the gospel (Mark x. 29), that have to be faithfully confessed, suffered for, defended.

subject, which is here introduced by Christ in connection with that of a uniquely dreadful sinfulness: so that the sin against the Holy Ghost can hardly now be passed without notice on our part. But the connection of that "blasphemy" with the present matter is obscure and only general, and our notes on it are placed in a subjoined Appendix.

## SEC. 2. *His Practice of Apologetics.*

It is a noteworthy circumstance that Christ, in His censures relative to failure to confess Him before men, made no account of simple scepticism, or indecision of the judgment.<sup>1</sup> That "honest doubt," which nowadays is made so much of by some professing Christians, as if the doubter were essentially a higher character than the believer—if not indeed the only character really high—is by the Christ whom they call Master and Lord nowhere exempted from the censure, or made an exception to the rule,—“He shall convince the world of sin . . . of sin, because they believe not on Me”; “This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, because their works were evil” (cp. 2 Cor. iv. 3–6).

This, with reference to His own ministry, implies that it had in it a clear light, such as to leave men without excuse for not receiving His doctrine; so that He could say with truth (John xviii. 37), “Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice,” and (John vii. 16, 17), “If any one be wishful to do His (God’s) will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.” And as of Christianity in His teaching, so too of the proof of it as proposed by Him.

Those who make light of apologetics, do they not so far make light of Christ,—of apologetics the King? His production of proof implies that in fact there *is* producible proof,—at least, that which He proposes: in other words, that there is rational *evidence* of the divinity of His religion or doctrine, evidence that is conclusively valid in the judgment of sane minds; so that, if a sane man be not convinced in his judgment by this evidence, he is shown by the light of it to be under some blinding influence of a darkness of the heart:—as Christ said, “For judgment I am come into this world . . . that they which see might be made blind” (John ix. 39);

<sup>1</sup> Cp. above, p. 21.

“How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?” (John v. 44); “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt. vi. 22, 24).

Some professing disciples, perhaps ministers, of Christ make light of “evidences,” and hold that there is not really proof of Christianity in the ordinary sense of the term proof,—that is, producible evidence addressing itself to the common reason of mankind, and approving itself to that reason as conclusive. Are they in this matter disciples of that Master (Matt. xi. 29), if in reference to it they reject His teaching? Do they, for instance, “learn of” Christ, if they do not believe Him when He says that there is evidence of *prophecy* such as to leave without excuse those who do not receive Him as the Christ of God,—“There is one that accuseth you, even Moses. . . . For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me” (John v. 45, 46); and (Luke xxiv. 25–27), “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken,” when, “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Similarly, if they do not believe Him when He speaks of evidence of *miracle* as conclusive to the same effect:—“Believe Me . . . or else believe Me for the very works’ sake” (John xiv. 11); “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin, but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father” (John xv. 24); “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes” (Matt. xi. 21).

Professing Christians may *reason* in support of the view, that miracle cannot really be a proof of doctrine, and in like manner, that fulfilled prophecy (miracle of forecast) is not evidence constituting proof. But if they so reason, do they not set themselves to *confute* Him as well as contradict Him,—if it be indeed a scriptural fact, that in the course of His ministry He *offered* such proofs? In the gospel record we find Him so doing, while (Matt. xxiii. 8) presenting Himself as the one

true Teacher (R.V.). How do they read these Gospels, or expound them? A professedly *Christian* teacher (1 Cor. iv. 1) is to be made no account of except as a "minister of Christ," and in *this* way a "steward of the mysteries of God." What, then, in his office of Christian instruction, feeding the flock of God, does he say about the gospel narratives of miracles of Christ, and Christ's own accompanying representations (Matt. xi. 3-6, ix. 6) regarding their evidential office, and His references to prophecy, with intimation that prophecy, too, is evidence? Does this "minister" speak out in refutation of Him whom Christians call Master and Lord? Or, simply say, that Christ is mistaken in His doctrine of the evidential character of these works and words? Or, only give out as his own view, that the works and words have no such character? Or, dissemble his disbelief in that "one" Master's teaching as to this foundation matter? In that case, the gospel history of this great ministry is in this relation surely far from being made to serve its purpose (John xx. 31).

The quality of the reasoning on which this rejection of Christ's teaching may seek to support itself, does not fall to be considered at our present stage of inquiry. At this point we are only inquiring as to fact in the actual teaching of Jesus (John iii. 12) with reference to proof of His religion,—proof to be found, not only in *His own personal testimony*, but also and especially in *His wondrous works*, and in the Old Testament *miracle of prophecy* fulfilled in Him.

I. HIS APPEAL TO PROPHECY.—It is an anecdote regarding Frederick the Great, that, having challenged a theologian to give him some one word that sums up in itself the evidence on behalf of Bible supernatural religion, he received the word "Israel" in answer to the challenge. With like reference to the proof of Christianity, there might be given the one word "Christ" or *Messiah*. At present we will take this word only as representing the fact, that Jesus appealed to prophecy in proof of His religion.

Of the historical fact of His claiming to be the Messiah or Christ (see Matt. xi. 1-6) there is no doubt in the mind of such a headmaster of unbelief as Renan. The disciples—we read (Acts xi. 26)—were called "*Christians*" before the



gospel histories were written. They went under that name (1 Pet. iv. 16) in the beginnings of the persecutions in Asia Minor; while (Acts xxvi. 28) at least as early they were known by that name in Palestine. "Christian"<sup>1</sup> was their name among the people in Rome, within thirty years of their Master's death, at the time of the Neronian persecution, the first of what are known as the "great" persecutions: from which date (A.D. 64) they were known only by that name to "the whole world" (Luke ii. 1) of Roman empire. That name is monumental of their Master's having claimed to be the Messiah or Christ: a claim which is put on the forefront of the gospel histories of His earthly ministry<sup>2</sup> (Matt. i. 1; Mark i. 1). But though there had been no other monument thus dating from the apostolic age, the historical fact of His having claimed to be the Christ is superabundantly evidenced all through the four "unquestionable" Pauline Epistles.<sup>3</sup> His having made that claim is historically no more doubtful than His having died on the cross, or having existed in the world. *And the indisputable historical fact of His having claimed to be the Christ is conclusive proof that He appealed to evidence of prophecy in proof of His religion.*

According to *John*, Christ's predictions regarding His own death and resurrection were made by Him a prophetic proof of His religion. Thus (xiv. 28) with reference to His "going to the Father," He said, "Now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe." Here the prophetic proof is on the Old Testament ground of testing principle (Deut. xviii. 21, 22), that prediction is shown to be divine by fulfilment. In *Matthew* we read (xxvii. 63), that His enemies spoke of Him as a "deceiver" in connection with foretelling His resurrection: they thus bore witness to *the fact* which now concerns us,—namely, the fact of His having made apologetic use of His prediction regarding Himself. His predictions regarding the future of His kingdom were not applicable to this use in His own day, when the event had not come to show their divinity by their fulfilment,

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* xv. 44.

<sup>2</sup> In the Gospels "Christ" is not a *proper name* of Jesus, but always an official title.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 23: *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, and *Galatians*.

where the thing predicted was beyond the reach of mere calculating human forecast.

Denial of supernatural prediction is historically associated with denial of the divinity of the Old Testament system generally, sometimes by professedly Christian teachers, even professedly Christian apologists. Gnostics rejected the Old Testament, on the view that the Old Testament Creator is not the New Testament God and Redeemer, but a demon from whose tyranny the Redeemer has come to set us free. Similarly in our own time professed adherents of Christianity regard the Old Testament as opposed to the New. But in this they contradict their very name of Christian. The generality of Christians regard the Old Testament religion as *being* Christianity, under the old form of Messiahism; and regard this view as established by the fact that the New Testament religion claims to be Messiahism in "fulfilment,"—which is another name for its founder's claiming to be the Christ. On their view, a *contradiction to Christianity* is implied (Matt. v. 17–20) in rejecting the authority of the Old Testament as no longer binding faith; and still more, in virtually denying the truth of its claim to divinity,—holding, *e.g.*, either that its prophecy is not really predictive, or even that its history is false, while in substance of system of divine revelation it is antiquated.

Here, again, we do not now inquire as to the grounds and reasons in support of certain views. At present our only question in connection with the views is, with reference to the apologetics of Christ, Did *He* place His religion on a foundation of such views? On the contrary, *in claiming to be the Christ*, He placed it (Eph. ii. 20) on "the foundation of the prophets," as truly as in sending the Holy Ghost He placed it on "the foundation of the apostles." Or, if we contemplate the new dispensation as in Him a counterpart ("fulfilment") of the old dispensation of types and prophecies, then what we see in His apologetic placing of His religion is, establishment of a solid way of faith on the sustaining twofold "foundation" of an arch, in which He is the uniting key-stone. The two sides of that arch, of revelation as ground of faith, are constituted by respectively "the apostles" and "the prophets," while the key-stone in which they are

one is "Jesus" as "the Christ." Though neither side of the arch should be able to stand alone, the two as united in that key-stone are strong as a mountain of Rock. This "rock" strength of the revelation (see Heb. xi. 1, 2) may have been felt and rested on by the men of old, though (1 Pet. i. 10, 11) they should not have clearly perceived, but only dimly divined, the "fulfilment" which was obscurely in the future. But, relatively to our present question, the *fact* of gospel history is, broadly, that Christ placed His religion on that foundation by professing to "fulfil" the law and the prophets.

His original enemies made Him a "deceiver" in prophesying about His own future. So now some of His professed worshippers explain His references to the Old Testament by saying or suggesting, either that He was mistaken about the Old Testament, or that, in accommodation to then received views of Scripture, He said about it what He knew to be untrue! We have not the keeping of their conscience. If they duly consider *what* is struck at by such explanation, their judgment may be led to the thought—

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
To offer it the show of violence;  
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,  
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

That, however, belongs to the general subject of the life of Jesus, the truth of revelation in Him, the gospel fact of incarnation. Relatively to our particular subject, of His apologetics, we note the fact, that *He* never suggested a possibility of His being mistaken in construction of Scripture, but always the contrary; while, so far from His showing a disposition to conform to received mistaken constructions of it, from the outset a leading feature of His teaching was, unflinchingly persistent antagonism to accepted misconstructions of the word of God, at the cost of a revulsion from His teaching which had a leading influence in finally bringing Him to the cross.

The matter comes out in Luke's account of what Christ said to His followers immediately after His resurrection,—in laying the first foundation of (Acts i. 3) His forty days' "com-

mandments . . . (in) speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Mark (xvi. 14) reports that He upbraided the disciples for not having believed the fact of His being risen when it was testified to them by eye-witnesses. Luke records what appears a much graver censure, on account of their not having believed *the Old Testament prediction* of the fact (xxiv. 25-27).<sup>1</sup> And again (vers. 44-46; cp. Acts xiii. 27-33 and 2 Pet. i. 16-21), at a meeting with the apostles-elect in Jerusalem, He said—in a discourse which laid out the foundation plan of the whole future campaign of Christianity on earth,—“These are My words *which I spoke while yet with you*, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations in His name. *And ye are witnesses of these things.*”

Paul's mixed metaphor (Eph. i. 18) about an opening of the “eyes” of the “understanding,” to realising apprehension of what is folded in the fact of Christ's resurrection, may have come to him, in his Roman prison where *Ephesians* was written, from Luke's (Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11) there telling him the story which is here recorded (Luke xxiv. 31; cp. ver. 45). And (see John xx. 22) the opening of the understanding in this record may have been an inward spiritual illumination such as Paul prays for on behalf of the Ephesian Christians. But in any case it was to *the understanding*<sup>2</sup> of His disciples that the risen Lord addressed Himself with reference to Old Testament evidence of prophecy; and what He said about the matter is, that *there is* in the Old Testament a pervasive forecast of the things which now had happened, so *intelligibly* clear, that the failure of disciples to see them *there*—in the forecast—was a proof (cp. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4) of blinding, dull carnality on the disciples' part.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Greek *nous* = “intelligence.”

<sup>3</sup> It also appears that *they* were kept from seeing the things in the Old Testament by inability to believe in His resurrection, crowning “fulfil-



"These," He said, "are My words which I spake while I was yet with you." This may imply that to the apostles-elect He had, in the previous course (Luke i. 2) of their attendance on Him, given instructions regarding Old Testament prophecy that are not reported in the gospel record of His ministry (cp. John xx. 30, 31);—even as that record may not contain a report of (Mark iv. 34) all the explanations of parables that He gave to those disciples "privately" (R.V.). But in our present inquiry regarding His ministry, what concerns us is simply the *fact*, so broadly and strongly appearing in that narrative of Luke, that Christ in His teaching made *the whole Old Testament*, throughout (cp. Heb. i. 1, 2) all its varied parts in their order, to be one great evidential stream of divine revelation finding its goal of true fulfilment in Himself (Matt. xi. 13 ; cp. vers. 3–6).

In the actual record of His public ministry it does not appear that He laboured in *argument* about the competency of the evidence of Old Testament prophecy. That among His hearers did not need to be debated about (John v. 39). It was (Acts xxvi. 27) fully believed in by every Jew who seriously believed anything about the Scriptures. All such Jews (see Acts xvii. 3, xxviii. 23) believed that the coming of Messiah and His kingdom of God was divinely foreshown and foretold in the Old Testament. In proof of the fact (John vi. 27) that He was that Christ who should come (Luke iv. 17–21), His especial appeal (John v. 36) was to those "works" of His which, while (Matt. xi. 3–6) predicted in the Old Testament as "signs" of the Messiah, are "signs" in the sense of being independent proofs, constituting in themselves a conclusive evidence of His being from God (John iii. 1, 2, xiv. 10, 11). The two sides of the work thus support one another. And even in this it appears that, were it only through His manner of placing His career in relation to the

ment," until the fact of that resurrection was brought home to them through their bodily senses. The Old Testament intimations may (cp. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11) thus to their mind have effectively been only, like the words of the women (Luke xxiv. 11—R.V.), "as idle talk":—as now is the case with some professed disciples of Christ, though *they* are professedly settled in belief of the reality of His resurrection, and both He and His apostles bear witness to the fact of His being in the Old Testament forecast.

Old Testament by claiming to be the Christ, *the whole course of His ministry was a public appeal to the Old Testament as a prophetic proof of His religion.*

Immediately after His baptism—in which (cp. John i. 33, 34) He solemnly claimed what, on the part of a sinless man, cannot be really understood except as a formal consecration to Messiahship (with atonement),—in His wilderness temptation He showed that, while He was the Son of God, He was resolved still to place Himself as a man, in human subjection (Gal. iv. 4) to God as well as dependence on Him, under law to the revelation of God's mind and will in Old Testament Scriptures. And in the Sermon on the Mount, publicly declaring His intended relation to the Old Testament (Matt. v. 17–20), He very strongly repelled the suggestion that He had come to “destroy the law and the prophets”: where the word for “destroy”—lit. *loosen*—means (dissolution of their *binding* force) abrogation or antiquation of their *authority*. The purpose of His coming, relatively to them, was, He said, “to fulfil.” We can understand that His fulfilling the law, *for* us and *in* us, involves antiquation of the Old Testament ceremonialism, as (cp. John iii. 30) the blossom has to give place to the fruit: though the *principles* of revealed religion once given remain for ever, and the inspired *record* of the revelation (2 Pet. i. 19–21; Rom. xv. 4) retains a permanently binding authority as the Word of God—with much “use of illustration” in the old history (1 Cor. x. 6). But on that understanding the fulfilment—*e.g.* as exhibited in *Hebrews*—does not “make void the law” as a silent prophecy, but truly “establishes the law.” In short, in His programme of teaching there was made fundamental—through its being assumed and proceeded on as a foundation,—1. generally, *the divinity of the Old Testament* permanently binding to belief in what it says and shows, and,—2. particularly and especially, its *predictive* character, constituting proof of Messiahism or Christianity through fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth.

NOTE as to *His detailed references to the Old Testament.*—It is to be noted generally, that they are mainly to *The Pentateuch*, and more especially to *Deuteronomy*. That is, the Scriptures which He has most emphatically sealed as divine in their authorship and indefeasible in their authority are precisely

those which, by some of His professed disciples in our day, are made to be essentially of no authority:—unless there be some kind of authority that can pertain to what natively is only a collection of legends, which somehow came down the turbid stream of a half-idolatrous people's unwritten tradition, to be at the long last worked up into a book or books, whose authorship more or less was forgery, as their purpose was imposture, putting, in the name of God, a completely false face on the constitutions and the history they profess to record. *Daniel*, which by some professing Christians is made a forgery of long after the return from Babylon, Christ assigns, in making a quotation from it (did He ever so quote anything but “the word of God”?) to “Daniel” by name as “the prophet”: while presumably it is from prophecy in that book (vii. 13), with reference to the *hinge* of divine providence relatively to all future world-empire, that He took His own peculiarly chosen title of the Son of Man. *Isaiah*, which some of them make to be more or less the work of a nameless writer or writers much later than the historical Isaiah, is quoted under this name by Him as well as by His forerunner and His apostles. The narrative in *Jonah*, which by some is made a mere fable (cp. 2 Pet. i. 16), especially on account of a strange miracle in it, He expressly makes, precisely in that strange miracle, to be a “sign” of the Son of Man's future passing through a similarly strange experience: while the repentance of the Ninevites, which the book represents as a fruit of the first foreign mission to the heathen, is by Him applied for instructive warning to the generation He addresses. As in one word of *Exodus* He finds proof—wholly dependent on supernatural revelation—of the coming resurrection of all the dead; so in a clause of a *Psalms*, whose Davidic authorship is now disputed by some of His professed disciples, He finds “David” furnishing, by the very turn of an expression there, proof of the divine Sonship of Messiah that would be pointless if the expression were not—as He intimates—given by divine inspiration. Could any believer in Old Testament prophecy now go further?<sup>1</sup>

Again we repeat, that at present we have not to do with such questions as, whether Jesus believed all this about the Old Testament, and could not be mistaken in His belief about it. We have to do only with *the fact*, that in all this He proceeded on the view that the Old Testament is divinely

<sup>1</sup> Here we disregard suggestions of “accommodation,” e.g. in *argumentum ad hominem*, which would have deceived His hearers.

infallible, and constitutes a manifold prophetic proof of His religion. And we repeat, that the fact in substance is implied in His having claimed to be the Messiah: since those whom He addressed, in a career all hinging on that claim, could be influenced in its favour only through their coming to believe (John i. 45) that in Him was the fulfilment of the Old Testament Messianic "hope."

II. HIS APPEAL TO MIRACLE.—Here, too, *the fact*, which is what here and now alone concerns us, is quite beyond all possibility of reasonable question, and can hardly be said to be questioned in a manner calling for notice in our inquiry,—that is, in any way that is not quite insignificant relatively to the interest and prospects of apologetics:<sup>1</sup> the fact, namely, of His having professed to work miracles in proof of His claim. It was attested not only by the Jews, for generations after His death, ascribing His "works" to Satan, and by, *e.g.*, heathen Celsus, a "philosopher" who had studied this religion in the Scriptures Old and New, ascribing the miracles of Jesus to magic learned in Egypt. Not less effectually the same witness has been borne by the most recent headmaster of learned unbelief in our day: *e.g.*, in his infamous representation of the raising of Lazarus, as a mock resurrection in which Jesus and His disciples were, with the Bethany family, conspiring deceivers. On Renan's infamous view, it would be a demonstrated *fact* that Jesus professed to work miracle in proof of His religion.<sup>2</sup> The "mythic theory," which is the only real attempt that has been made to give *any* view of His career that does not include His professing to work miracles, was publicly abandoned a generation ago by its representative destructive critic in our new time. And though he treated our Gospels as mere books of fables, yet, in order to account for *those* things about Jesus that must have been at the beginning of the tradition regarding Him, Strauss, after a season of notoriety for his "theory," found himself compelled to fall back from it into the old "vulgar rationalism" of

<sup>1</sup> See as to Professor Huxley, above, pp. 22, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Unbelievers whose good feeling revolts against that infamy, will do well to consider, what *other* view can there be, *except* that Jesus is the Saviour Son of God?



owning that there *was* in fact, on the part of the real Jesus, a profession to work miracles,—while explaining them away into imposture and gross delusion: an explanation which, still, is testimony to the historical reality of that *profession* to work miracle, which is the only thing in question at present.

NOTE on *His detailed references to miracle*.—Here, too, it was not necessary for Jesus to debate the question as to the underlying ground of *principle* of the proof. Those whom He addressed held that principle as revealed in the Old Testament (Matt. xii. 28): believing,—1. (John vi. 30, 31) generally, that religion is appropriately evidenced by (“signs”) works of *extraordinary supernaturalism*;<sup>1</sup> and,—2. (vii. 31) in particular, that by such working *the Messiah was to be accredited* when He should come (at Matt. xi. 2 “the works of the Christ” is in the connection equivalent to, *the test-works of Messiah*). The full description of miracle, derivable from Old Testament facts—“signs, and wonders, and mighty works”—does not appear to have come into use until after His resurrection (Acts ii. 22; 2 Thess. ii. 9; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12); but, *N.B.* (Acts ii. 22), was first employed to describe “the works of Christ” in the fundamental pronouncement of Christianity at the great Pentecost. The description “mighty works” is applied by Christ to His own miracles in only one recorded case (Matt. xi. 20–23), where it gives pointed force to His upbraiding of those who had not yielded to their suasive light of evidence. The strong Greek word for the “wonders” of our version (*teratā*—lit. “terrific things,”<sup>2</sup> see Luke v. 8) is employed by Him in only one recorded case (John iv. 48)—to a similar effect. Ordinarily He spoke simply of His “works” (“*the*” works, “*His*”), but in such a manner as to imply their evidential miraculousness (John x. 25, 32, 37, 38). And the miracles, *e.g.* under the description of “signs”—at some places in our Authorised Version made “miracles” (*wonders*) to the detriment of the sense—He represented as being His special or most appropriate witnesses, assigning to them an evidential place much higher than that of prophecy (John v. 34–36).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Extraordinary = “wonder”—Lat. *miracle*; supernaturalism = “mighty work”; both, to the effect of “sign” = evidential indication.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek word “miracle” (*wonder*), *thauma*, is never put to this use in the New Testament, where it occurs only at Rev. xvii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> While the prophetic word reaches us through a human medium (2 Pet. i. 21), the miracle (John xiv. 10, 11; cp. Heb. ii. 4) is, so to speak, an *immediate* work of God—as if (Ex. viii. 19) showing His hand most plainly.

At John v. 34-36, the Baptist is referred to—not, as having done no miracle (John x. 41), but—as representing the *prophetic* attestation of Jesus as the Christ. And affinity of miracle to prophecy is represented by the Lord's own favoured word "sign" (*sēmeion*). He thus did not make miracle to be the *only* evidence of His religion. On the contrary, even in assigning the higher place to miracle as external evidence, He gave a place to prophecy: placing it (we saw) as a foundation of the whole revealed system; while assigning the highest place of all attestation to the internal evidence (John vii. 17, xviii. 37) of the truth as commending itself to the true-hearted (Luke viii. 15)—the sun as shown to the seeing eye by shining, by being the sun,—divinity self-shown to the pure heart by being divine (John viii. 12; Matt. v. 8; cp. 1 Cor. ii. 6-16; 2 Cor. iv. 3-6). Hence, to dwell on the value of the historico-prophetic evidence, or to emphasise the superlative worth of the internal evidence, when the question is about miracle,—is to speak wide of the question of *fact* at present in hand, *Did* Christ make apologetic use of the argument from external evidence of His miraculous working? To disregard *this* evidence out of professed regard for those other Christian evidences,—would not that be to set Christ against Himself, while setting at nought His authority as our Master in apologetics (Mark vii. 7 and Matt. xxii. 29)?

He did not make all real miracle to be proof of truth in religion. When (Matt. xii. 22-30) the Pharisees objected to His work of exorcism, that it was done through employment of Satanic agency, He did not say that there can be no such thing as real miracle of Satan (cp. 2 Thess. ii. 7-10), nor (cp. Rev. xvi. 14) that real miracles cannot be employed as misleading proofs of a false religion. On the contrary, He warned His disciples (Matt. xxiv. 24; cp. Rev. xiii. 13, 14) that in the coming testing times miracles—real or unreal?—were to be worked on behalf of false religion claiming to be heavenly and Christian. And in answer to the Pharisees' objection, what He said was, in effect, that the truth of His miracle was shown by its tendency or scope, to destroy the tyranny of falsehood and wrong (cp. Deut. xiii. 1-3); so that what manifestly was working in it was God's omnipotence,

founding a new kingdom of righteous peace and truth (see Luke xi. 20; cp. Ex. viii. 19). The Jews, in their Old Testament education through history (Ps. ciii. 7), had not learned,—*e.g.* from the Egyptian campaign of wonders,—to believe that the imitation wonders on behalf of false gods and tyranny of evil were unreal. Consistently with what is shown in the scriptural record of them, they might be real though untrue or misleading. Christ placed the evidential truth of His “works” on the ground of their manifest fitness for promotion of the kingdom of salvation in a way of truth and right. He did not make simply temporal beneficence of miracle the testing mark of its truth. Peter (Acts x. 38) made a point of that beneficence; and no doubt it characterised the miracles of Jesus as a class. But the swine-miracle and the blighting of the fig-tree did not show it on their faces. Even relatively to the substance of religion, “the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” The operations may be varied while the purpose is one. In the system of the religion the law has an office, for establishment of truth and restored moral healthiness or salvation. The Mosaic judgment-works were thus beneficent relatively to the true highest interest of mankind. Even a Gadarene swine-owner might be infinitely a gainer through the spoiling of his goods; and the sermon of the blighted fig-tree was worth more than its cost—like the cost of candle-light for reading the Bible. All which goes to show that Irenæus is on slippery ground if he make temporal beneficence to be the test of truth in miracle. But Peter (Acts x. 38), even when referring to that beneficence as a general character of the “works” of Christ, adds, “healing those who were oppressed (lit. *tyrannised over*) by the devil. He so reminds us of what Christ Himself said (Luke xiii. 16) about even bodily infirmity, that it meant a binding by Satan. On the view thus appearing, there was a *spiritual tyranny* of evil, established in man through possession of his natural faculties and capacities and other gifts. And Christian civilisation is monumental proof, that if Gadarenes lose their swine, mankind may even in temporal goods be immeasurably the richer for that impoverishment (Matt. vi. 33).

Christ made miracle to be, though not the exclusive test.

yet a conclusive test, of the inward character of those who see that outward work. Thus (John vi. 26) His multiplication of the loaves and fishes brought into view a blinding carnality, such that (cp. vers. 30, 31) men did not see the "sign" in that work who fain would have made Him a king. The woful hardness of heart (Matt. xi. 20-23) in respect of which outwardly favoured cities showed worse than heathen Tyre and Sidon, yea than Sodom, was *tested* so as to come into manifestation—while aggravated into obduration—through the doing of "most of His mighty works" in them. And thus, as (John xvi. 9) the crowning sin is, not to believe in Him,<sup>1</sup> so (John xv. 24) the crowning proof of sinfulness in men, heart-hatred of the living God, arises from His "having done the works among them which no other man did." All which implies that, if we will believe Him,—whom Professor Huxley believes utterly,—not only is there an outward light of evidence in true miracle, but His miracles (cp. Heb. iv. 12) have in them a most searching light for manifestation of the inward moral condition of those to whom they come (John ix. 29)—as they come to every one who reads or hears the gospel history (John xx. 30, 31 ; 1 John i. 1-3).

*The ordinary instruction*, that (see Luke i. 4) in the first age was given to converts, is not what is represented by the apostolic Epistles—written for a different purpose from ordinary congregational instruction. It is represented, rather, by the gospel histories (Acts i. 21, 22 ; cp. 1 Cor. iii. 8-15, xv. 1-8, xi. 23, etc.), the digest of the fundamental apostolic "declaration" (2 Pet. i. 16 ; 1 John i. 3).<sup>2</sup> The Gospels are abidingly the apostolic scriptural "foundation" (Acts i. 8 ; cp. John xiv. 25, 26, xv. 26, 27) of instruction to mankind. And this foundation is destroyed for men if they be led not to see the evidential supernaturalism of miracle shining

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Justin Martyr, *circa* A.D. 150, states that in the Lord's day congregational worship of Christians, apostolical memoirs called *gospels* were habitually read. His pupil Tatian prepared a *Harmony* of the Gospels for church use. And earlier—*circa* A.D. 125 ?—it is the *gospel history* that was basis of the "expositions" of Papias ; while—A.D. 120-140—the Gospels furnished materials for speculation to the heretical or infidel Gnostics.



through the history of Godman's earthly ministry. The homely human details of the history, so full of profoundest vital interest when seen as thus "transfigured" in their manifestation (John ii. 11) through our flesh, apart from that are—as in a mere *Ecce Homo*—dead and fruitless trivialty, of branches not abiding in the vine.

In a battle-picture every detail that appears ought to be represented faithfully, shown as it really is in itself; but if shown apart from the main action as a whole, the detail is *not* shown as it really is, since here there is nothing real that has not *battle* in it. Preaching, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, these in the gospel history have no *meaning*, in the true sense, apart from *the gospel* (see Luke x. 9, 11): that is, except as detailed individual actions in the great battle, or campaign (John xvii. 4), of man's deliverance by the Son of Man from spiritual tyranny of evil (Gen. iii. 15). And the meaning of the "works" in connection with the gospel is, *proof*, through evidential "sign," that the preaching in "the gracious words" of Jesus is divinely true. How, then, can the primeval Christians, under tuition of apostles, be supposed to have *grown* (?) into indifference toward the subject of miracle-working, thus vitally fundamental in the apostolic teaching regarding God in Christ? As if the branches were to *grow* into separation from the vine!

Yet, to sane interpreters of the primeval history, *this* appears to be the true explanation of a noteworthy *sparseness of allusions*<sup>1</sup> to evidence of miracle *in the Epistles*. That, on their part, has been made a ground of disparagement of this kind of evidence;—on the view, that it indicates, on the part of the primeval Church, a growing indifference to the subject, of miracles and their evidence, *consequent on* her growth in spiritual intelligence. But the construction thus put on the New Testament history is at best a specimen of crude inadvertence, if not of a rashness perilous to man's life in the truth. It proceeds in disregard of the fact, that the gospel history was the appropriate food of life to formed churches from the beginning, that the Epistles were in their nature mainly *occasional* utterances, and that the Gospels, representing the perennial pasture of the flock, came into existence mainly

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 75, 78, etc.

*after* the Epistles, to perpetuate, for all generations, in written form, what at the outset (Luke i. 2) had been orally delivered by those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word"<sup>1</sup>

Ordinarily there was in the Epistles *no call* to speak of the miracles for any common purpose of simply bringing them to remembrance (2 Pet. iii. 1) in the pure mind of the Christians addressed. *They were already in that Christian mind*, not only as remembered, but—*like the gospel history generally*<sup>2</sup>—as held vitally in the very structure and texture of the now historical Christianity of every congregation, so as to be included in all believing apprehension of the Christ of apostolical "foundation" testimony. In the ordinary congregational instruction<sup>3</sup> on that "foundation," of matter which now is digested in the Gospels, there might be little of argumentation—as if in debate with heathens—about the apologetic value of miracle; seeing that this value was of course owned by every believing Christian, so that there was no occasion for debating about it in a Christian community. But a knowledge and feeling of the value would nevertheless be operative in every believing mind and heart there, as a pervasive controlling influence in all the congregational exercises, as with a perpetual renewal of the recorded first impression of miracle of Jesus (John ii. 11), "He manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed in Him."

In the gospel history *Christ now teaches*, that the evidence of miracle is in its nature fitted for founding and upbuilding God's kingdom in the reason of mankind. In respect of externally evidential office, He made no distinction between what are called respectively the "greater" and the "minor" miracles of that history. There is a real distinction in the nature of the things, though not such as to make a difference in *that* respect. Some of the works, from their very nature,

<sup>1</sup> As to their fundamental "declaration," see 2 Pet. i. 16; 1 John i. 3; Heb. ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The Epistles contain almost nothing of gospel history—or, biography of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* by the teaching "elder" or "bishop." He is seen, as in the Acts and Epistles, in the recently discovered "Teaching of the Apostles," which Bishop Lightfoot placed (conjecturally) as early as A.D. 80 or 100.

are clearly either miracles or impostures; while in the case of others the marvellousness may be clear only from the attendant circumstances. It is, *e.g.*, only from the preceding circumstances that the great draught of fishes, or the coin in the fish's mouth, becomes manifest to us as unquestionably involving extraordinary supernaturalism,—were it only of predictive forecast. It is conceivable that the exorcism He speaks of at Matt. xii. 28 should not have really involved extraordinary supernaturalism in working; and that similar "works of Christ" should be unmistakably shown to be extraordinary "by the Spirit of God," "by the finger of God," only through *their connection* with the movement in His person and whole work on behalf of "the kingdom of God." On the other hand, His work of turning water into wine, multiplying the loaves and fishes, walking on the sea, giving sight to the born-blind, raising the dead,—is plainly either veritably extraordinary supernatural work or impious pretence. But between the two classes of the "works" He made no distinction in respect of evidential office. And *evidence* ("sign") was the distinctive office He assigned to them all in common.

The "minor" works, though, *if they had stood alone* (*e.g.* blighting the fig-tree), their extraordinary supernaturalism might not have been clear beyond a doubt, did *not* stand alone. They stood along with the "greater" works, which evinced the character of the system of His working. *They came at His bidding* (see 1 Sam. xii. 16, 17), for His purpose (*e.g.* Peter's penny), so as to show "the finger of God" here, though in another case the same thing might conceivably have happened in the course of nature or without real miracle. Accordingly (Matt. ix. 8) it is to one of those minor works that He appealed *in proof* of His having in Him here on earth the highest thing that there is in God on heaven's throne. That is to say, being miracle, it is *evidence*, manifesting forth His glory, such that men may "believe in Him."

Though the wondrous works are sermons about the meaning of the religion (Matt. xvi. 7–12) as well as proofs of its divinity, we are not entitled, in exposition or in construction of the history of Christ's earthly ministry, to turn the miracles into mere parables—occasions for meditating or commenting on commonplaces of the religion: as with reference to ordinary

history we are not entitled to put moralisings on providence and human nature *in place of* real expiscation of the nature of the evidence or character of the witnesses in a great trial. The gospel history is given for a purpose, most profoundly vital in importance (John xx. 31; 1 John i. 3). In order to attainment of that purpose, the history has to be seen in its distinctive nature. And it is not seen in its distinctive nature by those who do not perceive in it the great part that was taken, in the earthly ministry of Christ, by miracle as proof of Christianity. The branch is severed from the vine—through growth in spiritual enlightenment.

III. HIS PERSONAL TESTIMONY.—After looking at samples of Professor Huxley's handling of "weapons of precision," we may not welcome the now emerging recollection of a notable sample of it, though it be conveniently serviceable for illustration of our subject here and now. He severely censured Dr. Wace for speaking of the professor's patronage of not believing *in* or *on* Christ, as if this had meant, not believing Christ. He has intimated that, while holding it not a sin not to believe in or on Christ (cp. John xvi. 9), he does not patronise not believing Christ. He vehemently resents the imputation to him of not believing Christ, whose personal character he holds in profoundest reverence: so that Mr. Gladstone is carried away by the rhetorical torrent of that vehemence into exuberant lowliness of apologising for *his* having inadvertently referred to the professor's not believing Christ, instead of, his not believing *in* Him or *on* Him. But we, keeping our eye on one thing in the whisking phantasmagoria of speech, again inquire,<sup>1</sup>—(1) How does Professor Huxley happen to believe, because he profoundly reverences, a Christ regarding whom he holds we have no trustworthy means of information? How does he or can he know that Christ is anything but a Straussian myth, or (Matt. xxvii. 63) that He was not, in accordance with theorising of old "vulgar rationalism," an impostor,—perhaps (as Renan has represented) at the outset self-deluded,—one whom it would be folly to believe, and criminal to reverence? and (2) especially, *what* does he believe, or will he believe, on the credit of the word of Christ?

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 27, etc., above.



Would he believe Christ professing to have worked miracles?<sup>1</sup> or, if He should claim to be the Old Testament Messiah, the Son of God,—*e.g.* with utmost conceivable solemnity of an oath, sealed with His life's blood? The professor is aware that some such testimony is universally ascribed to Christ Jesus wherever He is spoken of. Would *he* "believe Christ" so testifying, swearing, sealing? If not, what on his part is the use of speaking about believing Christ, while resolved on *disbelieving* the "lock, stock, and barrel" of what the Christ in question really says about Himself? He surely cannot mean merely believing in commonplaces ascribed to Christ, or in other things whose truth we know independently of Christ's testimony? That would be dishonourable. For then a man might as well speak about believing Mohammed, or Zadkiel, or Baron Munchausen. What real meaning *can* there be in protestations about believing one, *whose personal testimony in its vital substance* is beforehand counted as worth nothing?<sup>2</sup>

The incoherence may be found where it is more surprising. Mr. Stuart Mill, for instance, thought so highly of the personal character as well as moral teaching of Christ, as to suggest that a good rule for our conduct of life might be, to do and be in all things what we think Christ would have approved. And *Ecce Homo*—once a nine days' wonder of eulogistic eloquence—was, under the form of criticism of gospel history, all one flaming torrent of admiration of the man Christ Jesus—especially His truthfulness. There may be many who, not professedly believers in Christ or on Him, yet really are of kin to Him, "not far from" His "kingdom of God." They will revolt from cynical plain speaking such as Renan's, in making Jesus to have been deliberately a "deceiver" (Matt. xxvii. 63) in His teaching, an impostor in His working, and a suicide in His death, so that He must have been a liar with His latest breath of life. But *in coherent reason*, have they a right to stop short of Renan's conclusion?

*Did Christ believe in Christianity* in any real sense? We are now proceeding on the fact that He professed to believe in it, placing Himself as personally a witness for its

<sup>1</sup> As an English deist said that *he* would believe Paul so professing. Had he read Rom. xv. 18, 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12?

<sup>2</sup> See John xviii. 37.

truth (1 Tim. vi. 13), offering His personal testimony as evidence of its truth and divinity (John viii. 12). The author of *Ecce Homo* may choose to look at the gospel history as if in that career there were no question about either divinity of person or Messiahship of office: as one may look at the fateful voyage of Columbus without seeing in it any thought of geographical discovery, or at the drama of Hamlet without Hamlet's part, or at the solar system without the sun. The sun of the system of the gospel history, that without which all details are dark and lifeless, is precisely this Christianity, of His being the Saviour Son of the living God. His claiming to be this not only was in His career. It *was* His career, the essence of His teaching, the professed reason of His working, the burden of the testimony He sealed on the cross. *Did He believe in it?* Was He at all in earnest about it? Was He commonly honest in any part of that career which it "filled all in all"? He called men into the belief of it as man's true way of life in God. He sent them to battle and to die for that faith. Was *He* a believer?

We need not here labour in inquiry as to the detailed contents of the Christianity in question here. We know what was the general nature of the Christianity (= Messiahism) of the Old Testament, which presumably He had studied (cp. 2 Tim. iii. 15), and (cp. John vii. 15; Mark vi. 3) which perhaps was the only book He had read. We know what was the Christianity that was proclaimed as from Him by His apostles immediately after His departure: the Christianity, *e.g.* of (Gal. iii. 10; 1 Cor. iii. 11) the "unquestionable" *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, showing what was the settled Christian doctrine of the churches at and before A.D. 57–A.D. 60; and the Christianity of the gospel histories, exhibiting the doctrine in its "foundation" facts. Excepting some surface of ethical commonplace, it has no real resemblance to what is the theme of some eulogies professedly on Christ and His career; it (Gal. i. 8) is essentially different from what is made by them to have been His message to mankind. At present, however, what falls to be considered by us is simply *the fact*, that He was a public witness for Christianity, that He died its "faithful martyr" (Rev. i. 5), and that He made His personal testimony a ground of believing that religion.

The evangelists ostensibly (Luke i. 2 ; cp. Acts i. 21, 22) record what was delivered by the apostles ; while the apostles (1 John i. 1—3 ; 2 Pet. i. 16) professed to declare what they had seen and heard of Him personally. Jesus of Nazareth, if we will believe them, *placed Himself as the Christ, the Son of God, at the foundation of the true revealed religion*, its true life's bread and wine ;—and so He did according to every account of Him that has ever been heard of. His testimony, committed to those witnesses, had been previously borne by Himself, before the nation, the priesthood, the Roman magistracy. What, then, relatively to the point as to the truth of His religion, are we to make of the fact that *He offered His personal testimony as ground of our believing that religion* ? There is on record (John viii. 13) a reference of His to an objection to His testimony as incompetent, on the ground that He was *His own* witness, and that the word of a witness is not good evidence regarding himself. He answered, that His own was not the only testimony in His favour, that he had in His favour an additional attestation by God. But He answered also, that His testimony was really good evidence, inasmuch as if He bore witness about Himself He *knew* about Himself. And in fact,—

The word of a witness, *if he be truthful*, is good evidence about himself in so far as he really knows about himself. The Baptist is to be trusted in his testimony regarding himself, that he is not the Christ, as well as when he says about Jesus that he (John) saw descending on Him—at His baptism—a token of His being the Son of God. So, in the circumstance of its being to Himself that Jesus bears witness, there is nothing that makes His testimony necessarily untrustworthy, any more than if He had spoken about common matters really known to Him personally. And as to that knowledge, *e.g.* about a divinity of Sonship, it is conceivable that an enthusiast should be mistaken ; though Jesus of Nazareth, in all that we know of Him, shines out as perfectly clear in mind from enthusiastic delusions, apparently perfect in calm solid poise of judgment.<sup>1</sup> So as to His being the Christ: making a

<sup>1</sup> So that His question, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" might be turned by us into the question, Did He ever, on any occasion of that so agitating a career, so much as appear to make any mistake in speech or

claim which was made by others, perhaps in some cases not insincerely. But even here *He assures us*, most solemnly, *that He really knows* the truth of the matter, and cannot be mistaken about it. And there is no ideal possibility of His having been mistaken about His own miracles; while there is no real possibility of reasonable doubt of the historical fact of His having professed to work miracles. About some of the "minor" miracles, if they had stood alone, a sincere enthusiast might be honestly mistaken. But even about these in their actual connection, and about His "greater" works (*e.g.* raising Lazarus), as to their being really not mere human works of His,—He *could* not, though He were only a man, be mistaken, any more than omniscient God could be mistaken. *He knew perfectly well* what was the real truth of this matter. *Is He entitled to be believed* about such a matter in what He well knows? Is He to be regarded as barely truthful in His character, commonly honest in action and speech? To this point the question comes. To this point it is brought by Christ Himself, in *offering His personal testimony* as proof of religion.

Thus we are reminded of what we saw<sup>1</sup> as to the great place assigned by the primeval Christians to the *witnessing* office of Christ, His *trustworthiness* or "faithfulness," as witness (Rev. i. 5, iii. 14) *His truthfulness* as a Rock foundation of our trust in God. And we perceive that there is no cause to wonder at the transcendentalism of vital importance which Paul (1 Tim. vi. 13) ascribed to the *witnessing* of Jesus on the supremely great occasion of His finally appearing to be judged before men:—a transcendentalism which (John xviii. 37) had on that great occasion been ascribed to His witnessing office by Christ Himself,—making witness-bearing, to "the truth," to have been a grand leading purpose of His coming into the world of creatures as a man. And now, without tracing the matter back to fontal theological principles of the faith,<sup>2</sup> let us consider, as a matter of apologetic history, *the fact* that here, in the earliest primeval dawning of that history, Christ action, to stumble into any one, even the smallest, word or deed on which we could now suggest an improvement?

<sup>1</sup> Above, pp. 16, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See John i. 18; cp. vers. 14, 1.



offered, in proof of Christianity, His personal testimony to its truth. This bears on the apologetics of all following ages: not, as implying that every apologist for this religion ought to put forward *his* belief in it as a ground of reason for other men's believing in it, but as showing that he ought to set forth, as a warranting ground and binding reason for their believing in Christianity, *the personal truthfulness* of Christ.

If they reverence Him, as Professor Huxley professes to reverence Him—so as to be violently offended if men *say* he does not believe Him—then let them *really* believe Him: not, crown Him with the thorns of a mock-belief, that rejects His testimony in its head and front, the soul and substance of what is really known of it. If we do really “believe Him,” it is impossible to rationally stop short of believing *in* Him or *on* Him: to stop short of this is a sin against the light of the believing that is in us—in all who “believe Him” in that lowest degree, below which there is no possibility of any real respect for His personal character. And this is a strong foundation of apologetical contending for His religion as a whole.

Of course, Professor Huxley, or any other man who holds miracles to be absolutely impossible, *cannot* believe Christ professing to have worked the gospel miracles, any more than he can believe God teaching that “all things are possible with Him.”<sup>1</sup> But in the judgment of minds really judicial,—seeking truth in this matter as history shows it,—not under blinding influence of atheistic prepossession,—it is a very weighty circumstance that Christ has borne witness to the *fact* of miracles performed by Himself. His testimony regarding Himself being the Son of God is *logically* of a similar cogency, while it harmonises with a uniqueness in the character of His mighty works, and, of course (John xiv. 10, 11), is powerfully corroborated by their testimony. And if, in its mysteriousness, the subject of that Sonship do not equally lay hold of the mind of the generality of inquirers approaching the religion as from a distance on the outside,—the subject of the Messiahship, on the other hand, while really containing within it the whole system of the religion (so, *Hebrews* = “*Christ* in the Old Testament”) has an abundantly wide-open breadth of aspect, such that he may run who reads.

<sup>1</sup> See Luke xvi. 27-31—where mark “repent” and “persuaded.”

So far as apologetics is now concerned, we need not here assign to Messiahism (= Christianity) as an historical religion any greater definiteness of meaning than *supernaturalism* of revelation and redemption. So far, there was no doubt as to its meaning in the mind of any believing reader of the Old Testament, A.D. 30; nor, A.D. 60, of any believing reader of *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, *Galatians*; nor, from A.D. 60 onward, of any believing reader of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *John*. What, then—it so falls to be asked—is to be thought of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth, at the opening of the period thus in view, placed Himself before mankind, and died on the cross, as witnessing the confession, that *He* was the Messiah, the Son of God? Surely that fact is at least entitled to a foremost place in apologetics, as being on the face of it a first-class proof of Bible religion, of Christian revelation and redemption. The fact itself, simply as matter of general history, is altogether unchallengeable at the bar of reason—irrespective of all questions about the trustworthiness of Scripture history.

To put His personal truthfulness *in place of* prophecy and miracle, to the effect of displacing these from evidential office, for the purpose of exalting the personal truthfulness as “alone in its glory,”—is surely a peculiar perverseness of reasoning. It is, by way of exalting His truthfulness apart from prophecy and miracle, to make Him a liar in connection with them; for *He* has placed them in that office of evidencing religion. Still, His personal truthfulness is a distinct element of proof,<sup>1</sup> which in some respects is deeper and of a wider range: even as His person, which in the catholic doctrine has its foundation in veritable godhead, is at the same time that by which, through His complete reality of a perfect manhood, all humanity is reached.

## CHAP. II. APOLOGETICS IN THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY.

In respect of evidence, Christianity is a tree-fortress,

<sup>1</sup> In this connection He (John viii. 17) brought in the principle of law, that “at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” If *miracle* be specially a testimony of the Father, and *prophecy* of the Spirit, there is a third place for the Son as a *personally* “faithful and true Witness.”

guarded by its own inward strength of life. In particular, this appears in the gospel history of the earthly ministry of Christ. That history is at once an exposition of the nature of the religion and a demonstration of its truth. In fact, at this hour and at all times, the four Gospels are the most effective of all apologies, doing more than all other things under heaven toward men's believing "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John xx. 31), "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." They may thus be regarded as in the Bible system constituting a sacred citadel, or temple fortress in the holy city.

But Jerusalem, whose temple was thus as the nation's heart of strength in a defensive system, at the same time had defences more external in her battlemented walls: which, relatively to our subject, may be regarded as representing the Old Testament revelation, with its wonders of wisdom as well as of power, "sealing" Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah Son of the Blessed;—so that Christians in their believing in Him are (Eph. ii. 20) "built on the foundation . . . of the prophets." And further, though Jerusalem's walls were removed, yet "the mountains round about" the city would be a natural fortification to her: yea, all Canaan-land,—fenced round by wilderness, Great Sea, Lebanon mountains, deep trench of the Jordan valley,—was it not by nature, for a warlike nation, as a wonderful entrenched camp? Such a comprehensive system of defences we now see in the apologetics of the apostolic age.

SEC. 1. *General Aspect*, with a reference to Christ's resurrection.

Still keeping mindful of the fact that the subject of our inquiry is not the proof of Christianity, but the manner of dealing with that proof,—or, of commending the religion to the *reason* of mankind (Isa. i. 18),—we will begin with considering, in the apostolic age, the *situation* of the religion relatively to that proof.

As appearing in New Testament history, the first century of the religion divides into three periods of nearly equal duration:—1. the period of gospel history, of the Saviour's ministry, down to, say, A.D. 34;—2. the Petro-Pauline apostolic period, say, from A.D. 34 to A.D. 67; and,—3. the

Johannine apostolic period, say, A.D. 67 to A.D. 101. This last of the three periods is historically a blank thus far, that the Scriptures give no detailed information regarding the propagandist campaign of Christianity within it, or labour for planting or founding God's kingdom among mankind; but only bring into view an inward process of consolidation, as in a church already formed, with constitution rounded and complete. The middle period, the Petro-Pauline, thus will form the basis of our present study of the great campaign.

The middle period extends over two distinct though connected cycles of movement:—1. the *Petrine* movement, centring in Jerusalem, and extending down to the Jerusalem Synod, say, A.D. 51; and,—2. the *Pauline* movement, from Antioch, in the Gentile world, down to the disappearance of the two prince-apostles (Gal. ii. 8) respectively of the circumcision and of the Gentiles. The two cycles of movement in some measure overlap one another; and the Pauline to some extent repeats the Petrine; as the situation and the work, circumstantially different in the two movements, were in vital respects essentially the same in both. For our special purpose it will be suitable to contemplate the Petro-Pauline period in its totality, not from a simply chronological point of view, but as in a logical survey of the whole period, in which (1 Cor. iii. 8–15) it is seen to include a twofold action, of planting or founding, and of watering or upbuilding.

The initial propagandist action, of planting or founding, is what, down to A.D. 62, is exhibited in *The Acts of the Apostles*: which might be entitled *The new-creative Acts of the Holy Ghost* through apostles and evangelists.<sup>1</sup> It is in this initial propagandism that we see the apostolic *practice* of apologetics, in the actual work of endeavouring to bring men into the new kingdom through use of reason. In the ulterior apostolic labour, of watering or upbuilding,—as represented, *e.g.*, by the Epistles,—we may see what was the apostolic doctrine as to apologetics, meetly crowned by the apostolic *prescription of Apology* at 1 Pet. iii. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Gesta Christi*; and *Gesta Dei per Longobardas* (title of Paul the Deacon's history of the Lombard conquest of North Italy). It is to be noted that the title, "Acts of the Apostles," though of very early date, is not given by Luke.



The astonishing rapidity of the spreading of Christianity in this period over a hostile world is a fact of general history (noted by Tacitus), which in the post-apostolic ages has been put to apologetic use as a presumptive proof of the religion, on the ground that such a success against so great an opposition implies divinity of authorship. And under the same head of "experimental" evidence there would fall to be included the proof that is constituted by the moral and spiritual *character* of the primeval Christian community, as (cp. Eph. ii. 7; 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3) constituting an evidential fruit of new creation in a morally ruined world. But for the purpose of our present inquiry we take that history into view only as illustrating *the situation* out of which the apostolic apologetics arose as from occasioning cause.

So far as regards the rapidly victorious extension of this new kingdom among mankind, we can read the history even in heathen annals. Thus Tacitus, who in his childhood may have been at Rome when Paul suffered martyrdom there, has<sup>1</sup> not only a general statement of the fact of that rapidity, such that at A.D. 64 the religion had laid hold in every part of the empire, and quarter of the imperial city, but also in particular the terribly glorious proof of the fact that is implied in his statement, that at that time (when presumably Paul was in a Roman prison, Acts xxviii. 30; Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1, vi. 20) there were found in Rome itself, on occasion of the Neronian persecution, "a vast multitude" (*multitudo ingens*—cp. Heb. xii. 1) prepared to die with horrible and infamous tortures rather than deny the name of Christ (Luke xii. 5-9):—a truly startling phenomenon within thirty years of the crucifixion of a young Galilean of humble rank at Jerusalem!<sup>2</sup>

Similar evidence—in general terms—is found in Suetonius,<sup>3</sup> who, like Tacitus, wrote within half a century of that first "great" persecution. And about the same date (A.D. 110) Pliny's *Letter to Trajan*, regarding the persecuted Christians of Bithynia (cp. Acts xvi. 7; 1 Pet. i. 1), incidentally brings

<sup>1</sup> *Annal.* xv. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Ullmann (*Historisches oder Mythisches*) gives as a *status questionis*, "What is to be reasonably thought about a historical Christendom founded on a crucified man, who was a Jew?"

<sup>3</sup> *The Twelve Cæsars*: "Nero," "Claudius."

into view the corroborative fact, that in Asia Minor this new religion had so early come to be established and deeply rooted, "a kingdom which cannot be moved." These heathen testimonies are sufficient as basis of apologetic argument on behalf of the gospel from its rapid success: inasmuch as they show, beyond possibility of reasonable doubt, that this religion, notwithstanding deadliest antagonism of the world's "powers," had, from lowliest beginnings, so early in that first century come in a real sense into firmly fixed occupation of the world (cp. Rev. xi. 15 and 1 John v. 4).

For filling up that outline as bearing on our subject, we may freely employ the historical materials to be found in the New Testament records of the apostolic age.<sup>1</sup> Thus,—1. in Rev. i.—iii. we see that, toward the close of the first century, while the gospel has encountered fierce oppositions on the world's part, in Asia it has, at least at many main centres of population, brought into being famous Christian churches, now in a second generation of their existence.—2. Back at near the middle of the century, at the date of Paul's Roman imprisonment, his propagandist movement, *always westward from Jerusalem*, has successfully extended over main central regions of the Roman world-empire, whose Japhetic civilised peoples were his peculiar province for subjugation of the world to Christ (see Acts ix. 15; Eph. iii. 8; Rom. xv. 19, 20, 24, 28): so that, *e.g.*, now (1 Pet. i. 1, v. 1, and Acts xiii.—xvi.) Christianity is established, in churches under elders, among those Anatolian peoples westward of "Judea" which were specified in the second of two groups of nationalities represented at the great Pentecost (Acts ii. 5–11);—while, though there is no scriptural record of his having ever, in accordance with his early aspiration (Rom. xv. 24, 28), personally reached the furthest extremity of that west,<sup>2</sup> yet it is far from unlikely that in his lifetime, and at the impulse

<sup>1</sup> *N.B.* These records, though they had been forgeries, might be valuable sources of history. In any case, they must have been written at latest in the second century, that is, within short human memory of the first, conformably to second century tradition regarding the first.

<sup>2</sup> There is a credible tradition of his having visited Spain, between a first and a second Roman imprisonment, and been brought thence to martyrdom at Rome.

of his personal movement (see 2 Tim. ii. 9), the gospel of the kingdom may have been preached in, say, Romanised regions both of Spain and Gaul, and of Egypt and North Africa. And,—3, in the meantime (1 Pet. i. 13), presumably the original apostles, absent from that *recorded* campaigning, were occupied, *eastward of Jerusalem*, in propagandist operations whose theatre was especially in the Parthian empire of the east, and whose central action was among the nationalities that are specified in the first of the two groups of the *vidimus* at Acts ii. 5–11.

Those original apostles, whose appearance at the Jerusalem Synod marks the culmination of *their* distinctive “foundation” labours (in “Judea,” Acts ii. 9), disappear from the record, now filled with only the Pauline operations in the (Japhetic) regions of the west. But it is not to be supposed that they through that great formative period were defunct. And in 1 *Peter*, sent west from *Babylon*,<sup>1</sup> we see presumptive proof of their not having gone to sleep, all through the intervening twelve years of western Pauline labours, but having been separately campaigning, in continuation of their original Palestinian movement, now eastward among (*Semitic*) peoples from Jordan to Euphrates and beyond it. And,—

Though there should not have thus been such formal completeness of *territorial* occupation of the “world” in its two empires, still, even in the western empire, on which there is sun-clear light of history of the Pauline propagandism, the gospel has had to deal with “the whole world” *spiritually* contemplated—that is, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles. It is to be presumed that the original apostles, in their eastern province of Semitism, though (see 1 Pet. i. 1; cp. Jas. i. 1) *their* special mission was to the dispersed of Israel, yet (see Acts x. 44–48; cp. xv. 6–11) everywhere, as they had opportunity, preached the gospel “also to the Greek” (Rom. i. 16—where “the Greek” is typical sample of Japhetic Gentilism; cp. Eph. iii. 8). And we know that Paul, in his westward movement through the regions of distinctively Græco-Roman civilisation, while he took Japhetic Gentilism for *his*

<sup>1</sup> To make this the *mystical* Babylon is purely arbitrary, and *mises* Peter at Rome. Still weaker is the suggestion of an Egyptian “Babylon.”

especial province, yet habitually (Acts xvii. 2, 3—where mark “as his manner was”), as he had opportunity, preached that “power of God unto salvation” “to the Jew first.” Such, in fact, was the action he took under the great apostolic commission (Luke xxiv. 47), “That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Christ’s name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,” and (Acts i. 8), “Ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth.”<sup>1</sup>

*The situation* that had to be dealt with in the primeval propagandism thus becomes disclosed in a light of history. The missionaries might—*e.g.* at Lystra or at Melita—have occasion to deal with a case of simple “barbarians,” whose religion was a credulously superstitious heathenism. But mainly, and in the first instance, their labours lay in a *civilised* world (the Jew-Greek; see 1 Cor. i. 22–24; Rom. i. 16; Col. iii. 11), where they were confronted with elaborate systems, which were a ruling influence among the peoples, though they should not be comprehended by the commonalty: the systems, either of Judaism founding on the Old Testament revelation, or of a naturalistic speculation at its highest in the Greek philosophy (then prevalently atheistic, Acts xvii. 18; cp. ver. 23), or of a mixture, combination, or amalgam of the two, found everywhere at the Gentile centres of population (Acts xv. 21; cp. Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20). Regarding the deeper causes of war (Eph. vi. 12) which lay in the nature of the *spiritual* condition of mankind as fallen (1 John v. 19),—an antipathy of darkness to the true light, ever ready to break out into open antagonism,—we need not now inquire particularly. With reference to commendation of Christianity to man’s *reason*, what has to be specially considered is the *intellectual* condition of mankind then and there addressed by the gospel (“the preaching,” 1 Cor. i. 21—R.V.). And that intellectual condition,—such as it must have been in “the Jew first, and also in the Greek,”—is visible, sufficiently for our purpose, independently of New Testament Scriptures, in the light of general history of the world as it then was.

<sup>1</sup> We thus interpret the Partition Treaty at Gal. ii. 9 by the subsequent apostolic action. Constitutionally (see Rom. xi. 25; cp. Acts xv.) the Pauline labour was only a *branch* of the whole apostolic work.



Regarding the Scriptures themselves (see more fully further on), in relation to our present subject, there need be no question. On simply historical grounds of literary judgment, their claim to be received as genuine apostolic<sup>1</sup> stands unshaken on the old foundations, and in our day has been demonstrated anew, in a clearer light of searching inquiry than before. Even unbelieving critics have been driven, by resistless force of argument, to place their origin as a class, not, far down in the second century (where they not long ago placed it), but at the latest near the opening of it, and more or less—more and more—in the first century. In particular, the substantially universal recognition, among competent scholars, of the “unquestionably” Pauline authorship of *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, and *Galatians*, at a date that is fixed at least four years before A.D. 64,—gives to apologetics a noonday light of history on the state of Christianity in the apostolic age, at the very heart of that central period—the Petro-Pauline—which precisely is the centre of apologetic interest in the apostolic labours. And finally,—

As we saw, with reference to that ministry of Christ, which (Acts i. 21, 22; John xiv. 25, 26, xv. 26, 27, xvi. 14) was the main burden of apostolic testimony, we have, even on the admission of the most “advanced” recent learned unbelief, independently of the Acts and the Epistles, trustworthy information sufficient for our present purpose—namely, to see how the apostles placed Christianity before mankind, with a view to commendation of it to men’s common reason. How they *must* have placed it we may learn even from, *e.g.*, heathen Celsus (and Jew Trypho) in the second century, not to speak of post-apostolic Christian writings and history. And the *Gospels* are, according even to Renan, a good means of learning how in fact they placed the story of the ministry of the Founder.

THE MIRACLE OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION.—We now will pause here in contemplation of that central fact. Its place in the whole post-Pentecostal representation of Christianity is more sun-like in commanding prominence (Gen. i. 16) than

<sup>1</sup> In this connection, with the *canon* of Scripture, “apostolic” means belonging to the apostolic circle: *e.g.* *Mark*, *Luke*, *James*.

even that of His claim to Messiahship in the gospel history of His earthly ministry. Especially, it so appears, in *proof* of His being the Messianic *Son of God* (Rom. i. 4). And this we now will consider in connection with a disposition or tendency, occasionally appearing among His professed disciples, to disparage the external evidence of miracle as comparatively a "weak and beggarly" thing—an *a b c* for babes.

In the apostolic age of *Scripture* history, that glorious resurrection *fact* is a Sun-rising (Eph. iv. 10), to fill with itself all the world of New Creation. Like the spring sun (John viii. 12), it new-creates the world on which it shines: diffusing all through that world, not only a revealing light (Heb. iv. 12) that brings all things into view, but (Mal. iv. 2) a healing light of life that makes all things new;—*being* (1 John i. 2) the new manifested life of everything that has in it the true life of righteousness in holy peace with God. That resurrection thus is not *only* an external proof of Christianity, but<sup>1</sup> Christianity itself, now risen and glorified in the divine Redeemer for His people of mankind. It thus is vitally fundamental in the whole system of the religion in such wise, that (1 Cor. xv. 14, 15) if men should cease to believe in the resurrection of Christ, He, in effect, would cease to be "believed on in the world" (1 Tim. iii. 16), as vegetation could not continue to exist on earth if the sun should cease to shine down from "heaven high." For—

Not only the glorious ascending of Christ is an out-shining "manifestation" (see John ii. 11) of the inner divine glory of His person and redeeming grace. It has come to be to such effect the key-stone of the whole system of external evidences of Christianity, that if His resurrection be not historically real the whole system of those evidences is an arch whose key-stone is withdrawn; while, on the other hand, the historical fact of that resurrection is not only a miraculous proof of His being the Saviour Son of God (Acts xiii. 33), but a key-stone binding into unity of system all such evidences, of the Old Testament as well as of the New. So the matter appears in the scriptural apostolic age.

In like manner, His miracles generally were, in the post-

<sup>1</sup> See—*cum grano*—Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*.

Pentecostal representations (Acts ii. 32, x. 38), not only manifestation, but proof (as, *e.g.*, at Matt. ix. 1-8). So, *e.g.* (2 Pet. i. 14-18), as to the wonder of the Transfiguration. It was evidential wonder: not only exemplifying the historical reality of extraordinary supernaturalism in the career of Jesus, but constituting proof of His being God's beloved Son,—proof on the strength of which (vers. 5-11) Christians were able to trust in God with full assurance of faith, so as to be on a solid way of attaining, through persistent progress in Christian graces, to assurance (see 1 Pet. i. 3-5, 18-21) of hope that maketh not ashamed.

In the fundamental manifesto of apostolic Christianity, to Jews at the great Pentecost and to Gentiles in the person of Cornelius and his friends, it was distinctly as *miraculous* that Peter made "the works of Christ" (see Matt. xi. 3-6) to be a rational ground of believing His religion. It was the extraordinary supernaturalism of the Transfiguration occurrence that he was able to look back to in his old age, from the gates of death, as for him and others constituting a solid ground of rational assurance of a glorious immortality beyond the grave: inasmuch as the original apostolic "declaration" (2 Pet. i. 16; cp. 1 John i. 3), of "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ," had not been fabulous or mythical, but genuinely historical.<sup>1</sup> And so, according to the apostolic representation, while the fact of Christ's resurrection is a triumph of Christianity in the personal and official glorification of its Founder (1 Pet. i. 21; Eph. i. 18-24), it is the *miraculousness* of the fact that makes it "the chief cornerstone" of the system of the Christian evidences. Yet the Epistles, full of the great fact as their sunlight all-pervasive, make almost no allusion to its miraculousness. Plainly, they give no full view of apostolic apologetics. Why *should* they?

So it may be now; when the Christian, "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," is all the day long under power of that "remembrance," which was awakened in his heart again this morning when again the Sabbath bells were singing, that "the Lord is risen indeed." When the bells are silent, the miracle they spoke of is perhaps not preached about, but it does not

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Ullmann's title, *Historisches oder Mythisches?*

lapse from the Christian people's mind. Nor—whatever may happen to be the particular matter of discourse—does that miraculousness ever lapse from the truly Christian teacher's mind or heart. The lapse would be a downfall from really Christian "preaching": perhaps into mythical or mystical theorising about Christianity: perhaps into mere naturalistic speculation about religion; or, declamation about philosophy, history, literature—anything or everything *but* the life and immortality brought to light in the gospel. The Church would sink into a Lyceum with a pulpit rhetorician instead of a Christian minister. That is to say, if we may credit *that* representation, of the nature of Christianity, which was the instrument of new creation in the apostolic age.

On the ground of information whose quality we have so far considered, we form the following—

OUTLINE VIEW of the subject of apostolic apologetics.—1. The main direct external reason for belief in Christianity, laid by the apostles before Jewish and Gentile mankind, was, the earthly ministry of Christ, culminating in His resurrection from the dead, a resurrection of whose historical reality as a fact they were personally eye-witnesses (1 Cor. xv. 4–8).—2. In the general course of His ministry, they founded especially on His works, and on these distinctively as being miraculous (Acts ii. 22, x. 38). But,—3. (see Acts ii., x., xiii. 14–41; cp. xvii. 3) they also, in proof of His religion, appealed to Old Testament prophecy as fulfilled in Him; so making the prophecy to be, apologetically, evidential miracle of forecast, or attesting wonder of wisdom.—4. Paul, who (we will suppose—see 2 Cor. v. 16) personally "saw" Christ only after His resurrection, refers only to this one of His miracles in evangelistic address to the Gentiles, while in addressing Jews he appeals for proof to Old Testament revelation.—5. As credential of *their own apostleship*, that is, in proof of their being to mankind the authoritative "*witnesses*" of God in Christ (planets of that sun, John i. 16), they appealed to *miracles of their own*, done in the course of their evangelistic labours (Rom. xv. 18, 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; cp. Heb. ii. 4). Finally,—6. (1 Pet. iii. 15) they laid an obligation on ordinary Christians to be "always ready to give an (*apologia*) answer to every one that asked a reason (*logos*) of the hope that was in them"; and (1 Cor. xi.–xiv.; Gal. iii. 5; Acts viii. 5–7) extraordinary gifts were in some measure exercised by others than the apostles. The *indirect* external



evidence, constituted by manifest new creation of moral life in the Christian community, we do not here take into view.

SEC. 2. *Fact of Definite Belief in Miracle among Christians in the Middle-Apostolic Age.*

That there was not such belief among them at that time, was held by Strauss, who admitted that, if they really held a definite belief in the miracles of our Synoptical Gospels, it would be impossible, on ordinary grounds of historical judgment, to refuse to own the historical reality of those miracles. This with him was a motive to mythical theorising, to the effect that, at the received date of our Synoptical Gospels—we will say, between A.D. 60 and A.D. 70—the Christians, relatively to the subject of miracle, were as yet only at the stage of day-dreaming about wonders in the career of their hero Christ, from which they did not settle into definite belief in His miracles as historically real until a later time. *For*, the supposed fact of historical reality of any miracle would destroy the whole Tübingen criticism of the New Testament history and Scriptures, in its foundation assumption that miracle is impossible: it would destroy the Hegelian pantheism on which this Tübingen assumption was based, and all other such atheistic naturalism, underlying so large an amount of the so-called “historical” criticism of Bible religion and its records in our new time,—as one puncture of a needle would destroy a balloon “as large as all out of doors.”

Though the mythic theory was publicly abandoned by Strauss thirty years ago, the question he raised in the interest of it, regarding definite belief in miracle on the part of Christians—we will say—before the last quarter of the primeval century, is of importance for us in the present inquiry, as opening our way to a closer view of apostolic apologetics. His apprehension was well founded: if the Christians of that early period really did receive as true the narratives of miracle in our *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, then it is impossible to deny the reality of such miracles except at the cost of abandoning rational grounds and principles of really “historical criticism.”<sup>1</sup> And we for our special purpose have an interest in here pausing on the question of *fact*, Did the

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *judgment* at 1 Cor. ii. 15, x. 15.

Christians of the Petro-Pauline period *not* believe definitely in miracle as historically real?

For a conclusive answer to this question we need go no further than those four great Pauline Epistles, whose genuineness was owned as "unquestionable" by the Tübingen school, as it is by Renan, and by substantially all sane scholars who have knowledge of the subject. They must have been written between A.D. 57 and A.D. 60, before Paul's final visit to Jerusalem, and after full rising of the justification controversy, regarding the ground of a sinner's pardon and acceptance with God. And they may have appeared in the order, —*Gal.*, 1 *Cor.*, 2 *Cor.*, *Rom.* But such *minutiae* of detail do not concern us here and now. What concerns us is only the substantive fact, that "unquestionably," in these letters of the then foremost apostle, to leading churches in representative regions of the Roman world,—east, middle, and west,—we have a broad strong light of history on the mind of Christians as it was in the middle-apostolic age.

In that light we see, to begin with, what to think of the infidel assumption, that of course the Christians of that infant church were *individually* infantile, so as to be capable of day-dreaming instead of thinking about the foundation facts of the so recent historical beginning of their religion, incapable of distinguishing dreams from reality. There is no trace of that in the four Epistles. The writer knows (1 *Cor.* x. 15) that his readers, though they should be widely astray in various ways, yet have (*nous*) common sense, that has been much exercised in distinguishing things that differ, not only with reference to plain outstanding matters of visible fact, at a time so recent as that of the appearance of Christ on earth,—a quarter of a century ago,—but with reference to foundation questions regarding man's relation to God. Thus, judging from *Romans* (A.D. 59) regarding the qualified *readers* of that Epistle, we may conclude that (A.D. 64) the "huge multitude" of martyrs in the Neronian persecution were not all day-dreaming babies not knowing their right hand from their left.

More particularly, in relation to our present subject, we mark a number of *distinct allusions to actual miracle* in these four Epistles, and observe especially,—1. that there is one

such allusion *in every one of the four* ; while,—2. there are only three other allusions to actual miracle in all the remaining eighteen Epistles ; and,—3. *not one of the four allusions*, and only one of the three, is to miracle of gospel history.<sup>1</sup>

This observation effectually disposes of the theorising assumption, that those early Christians were in such a condition of fanatical excitement in connection with religion as to be ready to believe any tale of wonder about it,—that their heated imagination was a hotbed for spontaneous generation of such tales. The “unquestionable” historical fact, here appearing in the remarkable sparseness of apostolic allusion to miracle<sup>2</sup> in writing to those Christians, is, that the subject, vitally important and vividly interesting as it was to them, yet was in no wise allowed by them to usurp a disturbing possession of their mind, or to interfere with any due concentration of mind and heart on those emergent matters, of the inward life and outward action of practical religion, which then called for attention. Of the kind of undesirable excitement that might have been reasonably apprehended, among recent converts, from a fresh living belief in extraordinary supernaturalism of God’s manifested working among them, there was a something (1 Cor. xi.—xiv.)—speedily corrected (2 Cor.)—at one critical moment, in the otherwise unruly Corinthian church abusing the spiritual gifts entrusted to her. But over all, what these Epistles bring to view, as the presumable condition of the Christian mind in the middle-apostolic age, is, relatively to such naturally exciting matters of thought and experience, a really wonderful calm sobriety, a solid poise of judgment, such as<sup>3</sup> we saw prescribed to His witnesses by the Lord, and such as may suggest their being under inward influence of the Spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind.

At present, however, we are not inquiring as to *the possible value of their opinion* about miracles, but only about *the fact of their definitely believing* in miracle as historically

<sup>1</sup> At 2 Thess. ii. 9 there is an allusion to Satanic miracle, and in *The Apocalypse* (chaps. xiii. and xvi.) there are (cp. Matt. xxiv. 24) several allusions to miracle in support of false religion.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 39, and below, p. 13, etc.

real. And in proof of the fact, *that they did so believe, universally*, we note (in the four "unquestionable" Epistles) the following—

DETAILS OF EVIDENCE.—1. *They all believed in Old Testament Scripture*: referred to at Rom. iii. 2 as "the oracles of God" (cp. 1 Pet. iv. 11). It is on the authority of that Scripture that Paul founds all his theological reasonings in these Epistles, which, distinctively "the theological," really represent the systematic theology of the whole Bible religion. Consequently, all Christians of that time must have definitely believed in miracle. For (1) the Old Testament sets forth miracle—in Egypt, Sinai, Canaan, Babylon—as historically real: if we will believe Strauss, it was its record of miracles of such ancient heroes as Moses and Elias that originally set the primeval Christians day-dreaming about miracles of Christ. Why, then, should they be—as Strauss alleged—unable to believe *Matthew, Mark, Luke*, on account of *their* ascribing miracles to Him? (2) The Old Testament, which they owned as a divine rule, very strongly *bound them* to belief in miracle—specially miracles of *Christ* ("Messiah").

The Redeeming God of Israel, set forth in that book, is not only "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises," but also, *miracle-working*—"doing wonders" (Ex. xv. 11). It was (Ps. ciii. 7) His wondrous "acts" through Moses that opened their mind and heart to the Mosaic exposition of His ways "at Sinai." Correspondingly (Ps. lxxviii. 1-8), in order to their continuing to be always rooted and grounded in His self-revelation, He charged them not to forget "*the works of God*," but "*show to the generation to come the praises of Jehovah, and His strength, and His wonderful works which He hath done.*" *Wonderfulness*, to Christians reading that ancient Scripture as their sacred book,<sup>1</sup> must have been a distinctive character of adorableness in the God whom now they worshipped in Christ. "*Wonderful*" (Isa. ix. 6) was the foremost name which in that book they learned to give to the "Child," the "Son," who otherwise was to be named "Counsellor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," "The Prince of Peace." How *could* they be disabled from believing gospels by *their* ascribing wonders to Him? How could they at all believe in Him without ascribing miracles to Him? (see Isa. lv. 12).

2. *They all believed in the resurrection of Christ*. The four Epistles are full of it as the day is of sunlight. Baur maintained constantly with reference to it, that two things must be

<sup>1</sup> At the time in our view, *the Old Testament* was their only sacred book; the new Scriptures did not exist.



held certain if there be any such thing as historical certainty, namely,—1. that all Christians, from the earliest dawning of Christianity after Christ's death, believed in His resurrection as a fundamentally vital fact of their religion, and,—2. that Paul, throughout his Christian career, was under power of a full undoubting conviction of his having personally conversed with Christ risen and glorified. How to account for these two things if that resurrection be unreal, Baur was confessedly unable to tell. But he retained his belief in them to his dying day.

The fact of primeval belief in that resurrection is demonstrable even from the Christian observance of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 26—Paul's conclusion of *the earliest extant history of the institution*).<sup>1</sup> Leslie (in his *Short and Easy Method with the Deists*) reasons from the nature of this Ordinance and of the Passover, to the conclusion that the events which they respectively commemorate cannot but be historically real. But here, again, we are concerned only with the fact of *the belief*. And the fact of the belief, on the part of Christians feasting *in expectation of His second coming*, is clear in the primeval Supper as it is in the primeval Lord's Day (1 Cor. xvi. 2). There is, however, no call for any such particular proofs, of the fact of the belief, to a reader of the four Epistles.

Every one of the four Epistles is *all* monumental of that fact. The very title *apostle*, in Christian usage (Acts i. 22) has in this case no meaning apart from belief that "the Lord is risen." To the Christian readers (see 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16) of these letters, in them His resurrection "filleteth all in all." How, then, could those readers be unable to believe in the historical reality of miracles done in His previous course of ministry? As compared with the transcendent reality of that resurrection, all the previous miracles in our Gospels are only sunrays in comparison with the sun that shineth in his strength.

3. *They all believed in miracles wrought in their own day.* This third head of evidence brings us into the main central stream of the apologetic history of that middle-apostolic period.

The allusions in all the four Epistles are exclusively to works that were done in the apostolic age, within the personal knowledge of the Christians, whose belief in miracle is the matter of fact in this present question. The particulars regarding that belief of theirs as matter of fact appearing in the four allusions, are exhibited in the following Note:—

<sup>1</sup> His version of the narrative conforms most nearly to Luke's. It will be remembered that Luke was his companion.

DETAILED NOTE of the particulars under the third head of evidence.—(1) *Paul worked miracles all through his career*, Rom. xv. 18, 19.<sup>1</sup> An English deist said that if Paul should say he personally had worked miracles, he (the deist) would believe it—such “a gentleman” was this apostle in his estimation. Paul said it to the Romans, *circa* A.D. 59, in an “unquestionable” Epistle, reckoned the greatest ever written. He may have to write guardedly, as the ashes of the circumcision controversy are not yet cold, and the Jewish element in the Church is probably very strong at Rome. But, writing to a community to whom he is personally a stranger (Rom. i. 13), at a time when apparently (see 1 Cor. ix. 2) even his apostleship has been called in question among Christians, he here exhibits “the signs of an apostle” (2 Cor. xii. 12): employing, for description of “those things which Christ hath wrought through him,” all the grand array of New Testament names for miracle,—which (Acts ii. 22) were first employed, at the great Pentecost, by the protapologist of Christendom with reference to those things which “God did by” Jesus of Nazareth.

It does not follow from this statement that he worked miracles in every place, as the bell is rung<sup>2</sup> before every sermon. But the statement shows that, from Jerusalem westward, through the whole curriculum of his evangelistic labours, he was, up to this time of his writing, in the way of working evidential wonders where occasion called for them; so that the working was a feature of his public career.<sup>3</sup> At Rome, where no doubt (see Rom. xvi.) there were Christians from every part of the empire, to many of whom—from Syria, Asia Minor, and the Greek mainland—he was person-

<sup>1</sup> See on Acts xix. 11, below, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> John Foster spoke of miracle as “the great bell of the universe” striking.

<sup>3</sup> When did he go round as far as “Illyricum” (*Dalmatia*)? Presumably at the time of his first apostolic labour at Corinth (Acts xviii.), A.D. 53–54. During that year and a half he could radiate from Corinth into the adjacent regions (see 1 Thess. i. 7, 8, written at that time), as (Acts xix.) he afterwards radiated from Ephesus as a strategic centre of his propagandist campaigning in Asia Minor. It *may* have been at this time of his second recorded visit to Corinth (see 2 Cor. xi. 10).

ally known, the character of his labours westward from Jerusalem could be as well known about as if they all had taken place before many witnesses in the Roman forum. *Though Paul had been capable of saying the thing that is not, it is morally impossible that he should have made this statement to the Roman Christians, if a definite belief in miracle had not been in full possession of the mind of Christians generally at the time.*

(2) *All the apostles were miracle-workers*,<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 12.—Here, too, he employs the whole grand array of New Testament names for miracle.<sup>2</sup> Here, too, he emphatically claims (cp. ver. 11) to have copiously done such works himself. It was at Corinth, some five or six years ago. And it extended—so to speak—through a campaign of such working on his part (the “patience” here is a soldierly *endurance*, or persistency in effort—as at Heb. xii. 1). And here too, in a time of controversy and partisanship (1 Cor. i. 12, ix. 2), he has to speak guardedly. *It is morally impossible that he should here have spoken as he does if the fact of his having worked miracles, most memorably, at the founding of the Corinthian Christianity, had not been fully believed in by the Corinthian Christians.*

But any such thing believed in at Corinth, on that isthmus<sup>3</sup> which was a bridgeway of commercial and other intercourse between the eastern and the western Roman empire, would speedily be noised over all the Roman “world,” and perhaps (*e.g.* by travelling merchants in the Euphrates regions, in Spain, Gaul, Germany, even Caledonian Britain) far beyond its borders.

But further and especially, *the reference, in the first instance to Paul at Corinth, is really to the whole apostolate*

<sup>1</sup> A professional “thaumaturgist” (Greek for *miracle-worker*) might be a conjuring quack, the most worthless of mankind (*e.g.* the *gōetæ* at 2 Tim. iii. 13).

<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, in addition to Acts ii. 22 and Rom. xv. 19, the array is found only at 2 Thess. ii. 9, where the miracles are lying wonders of Satan.

<sup>3</sup> An “isthmus” was what in the Scottish Highlands is called a *tarbet* (=“draw-boat”)—a neck or saddle of land between two waters or seas. The position of Corinth was most advantageous for Paul’s campaigning, as a strategic centre of operations, like Ephesus afterwards, and finally Rome.

in its whole course of propagandist labours. "The signs of an apostle" here is literally "the signs of the apostle" (cp. "the lion's roar," "the poet's eye," "the scholar's melancholy"),—that is, the specific "marks" of apostleship (*principia cognoscendi*), badges of apostolic office. Paul's present employment of the expression implies that every apostle was a reputed miracle-worker, that the miracle-working "power" (Acts i. 8)<sup>1</sup> was to an apostle—like "holiness to the Lord" shining on the breast or brow of a high priest—the received visible attestation of official right (cp. Heb. ii. 4; and, as regards attestation of prophetic office, Deut. xviii. 20–22). Though an apostle should not be always and everywhere working wonders,—as an ambassador is not always everywhere producing his credentials,—he had the "power," and would exercise it as occasion called, so as to be known to possess it. Whether in point of fact there was this supernatural attestation accompanying the apostolate, must have been well known to all Christians, and among unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, wherever the movement extended. In a public letter to Corinth, *Paul could not have spoken as he here does if miracle had not among Christians been believed in as real in the case of every apostle.*

(3) Apparently, *miracle-working was not altogether restricted to apostles*, Gal. iii. 5.—It is conceivable that the worker here intended should be simply the Holy Ghost (cp. Rom. xv. 18, 19), without understood reference to any individual human instrument in His working; or otherwise, that the individual should be Paul himself, say, in the past times of his founding the Galatian churches. A more natural—that is to say, a more easy and obvious—construction is, that the miracles were being worked, at the time of this writing, by some trusted associate<sup>2</sup> of the apostle's labours,

<sup>1</sup> The "power" at Acts i. 8 is (*dynamis*)=*might* or force; the "power" at Acts i. 7 (R.V. "authority") is = *right*, of sovereignty.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to think that the lieutenant may have been "trusty" *Silas* (1 Pet. v. 12). He disappears from the record (1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1) at the time of Paul's founding the Corinthian church, until the time of Peter's writing to Anatolian churches. The great Jerusalem prophet (Acts xv. 32) had accompanied Paul in the second missionary journey at the founding of them, and had come to be, next to the apostles, the foremost Christian in the world. We cannot think of him as having



placed in charge there in his absence, as Timothy and Titus will be his lieutenants elsewhere at a later date, and as (Acts viii. 5-7) Philip the Evangelist was employed in an earlier movement. A sort of deputy-apostle for a specific mission might, until its purpose was accomplished, be entrusted *pro hac vice* with the distinctively apostolic "power" (see Mark xvi. 17, 18). Such an appointment in particular cases might be in the line of the general provision at Mark xvi., and in keeping with what is said about the distribution of spiritual gifts at 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. Such occasional exercise of the "power" by an evangelist still could leave the permanent possession of it a distinguishing mark of apostleship.

But the interesting question, Who was the worker at Gal. iii. 5—*e.g.* "faithful" (1 Pet. v. 12) Silas with a special mission?—is for us at present only a side-question. What lies straight on the line of our inquiry now is, the substantive fact that, whether at this very time of Paul's writing to the Galatians, or, say, at the time, some six years ago, of his founding Christianity among them, miracles were worked among them in attestation of the true doctrine of grace. Though he had not been the last man in the world to say anything untrue, Galatia in its present temper is the last place in the world to which he—*such* a soldier on the warpath—would expose himself by writing what could be challenged. "Unquestionably" those Galatians believed in the historical reality of miracles quite recently performed among themselves, before their own eyes, while perhaps those eyes were the opposite of likely to see them if they were not there as stubborn facts. And Paul, now writing as he does, effectively brings in those Galatians as accessory witnesses to the reality of the wonder-working among them,—about which, as matter of plain fact, they really could not be mistaken.

been idle during the ten momentous years preceding his reappearance at Babylón. He may have been all-worthily employed, as organising superintendent (Tit. i. 5, 7), in resuming and completing Anatolian work which had been so strangely interrupted (Acts xvi. 6, 7) when Paul and he were called away to Europe. In the Pauline movement, his place would thus be like that of Philip the Evangelist in the Petrine movement. He was the natural mediator between the tendencies to Judaical and Gentile extremes.

(4) Apparently *there were supernatural operations not restricted to official persons of whatever grade*, 1 Cor. xi.—xiv.—With reference to the evanescent spiritual “gifts” at Corinth, as distinguished from abiding graces of “faith, hope, charity,” we need not now inquire beyond the point of fact that (xiv. 24, 25) they were deemed in some way extraordinary supernatural;—such, *e.g.*, as to be fitted to produce, on heathens looking in upon the Christian assembly, an overpowering impression, as of awfully manifested presence of the living God. Such an impression, made on a passing wayfarer between east and west, might speedily come to be heard of (cp. Luke ii. 38; Acts ii. 5; Matt. ii. 1, 2) at the remotest extremity of the empire, and beyond it, as a token of the coming and kingdom of a great one—a star as of Bethlehem, that might lead wise men to travel from afar in search of the salvation thus betokened for humanity.

Apparently the gifts could—thus far like ordinary gifts (Eph. iv. 8)—be perverted for personal or sectional purposes of ambition, or even of vain display, or otherwise mishandled at the cost of decency and order. They thus may have differed from the apostolic “power” to work miracles, which was reposed in individuals for attestation of their office and accrediting of their doctrine,—by being reposed, vaguely, in the Christian community for manifestation of God’s presence in the movement. In that case they might be, perhaps for an occasion, more or less at the command of individuals not holding any definite office or commission, ordinary or extraordinary. But in any case, for the purpose of sending abroad an impression that might prepare men for the coming of the gospel to them (cp. Mark i. 1, 2), or impel them to go in search of “the kingdom,”—the gifts might be placed there, and similarly at other centres of radiation like Corinth, in respect of strategic advantage for propagandist operation on the surrounding world. It is, however, only at Corinth, and that only as for an instant, that we obtain a glimpse of them in recorded manifestation; and this manifestation of them, locally and as if momentarily, does not give much clearness of view in the direction shown by the preceding particulars of evidence regarding definite belief in miracle. Still,—

In this case, quite clearly, the operations—whatever precisely may have been their nature—are in progress at the time of Paul's writing about them; and here, perhaps, most clearly of all, it is inconceivable that he should have spoken as he does if the existence of the things he speaks about had not been fully believed in and well known at the spot;—while such things known or believed in at Corinth would unfailingly be inquired about, if not well known, among Christians all the world over, to whom Corinth, great capital of European Greekland, was “a city set on a hill.”

*A conjoint view of the particulars* may warrant the following observations:—

1. The *general character* of the four Epistles, as public apostolic allocutions, bearing, at a crisis, on foundation matters of Christianity, places the whole Christendom of A.D. 57–60 as accessory witness along with Paul regarding the matter of fact in our present question. He could not so write about the matter if all Christendom did not believe in the fact.

2. The *incidental character*<sup>1</sup> of all the four allusions to miracle is to be noted as implying that the—so to speak—*amount* of belief in miracle among Christians at that time must in reality have been vastly greater than at first sight appears. It is only through what, relatively to the main course of Pauline operations, even at Corinth, was only accidental side-matter, that we become aware of the existence of the supernatural gifts which were there and then in operation, though they must at the time have been much in the mind of both Christians and heathens far and near. The important circumstance<sup>2</sup> that miracle-working (see Heb. ii. 4) was not wholly restricted to apostles personally, would not have been heard of by us, were it not for what might be called an untoward eccentricity of Galatian Christians. The great fact that the miracle-working “power” was universally deemed essential in the equipment of every apostle, as artillery is in the equipment of every army corps, comes to our knowledge only through a seemingly accidental side-utter-

<sup>1</sup> Which see further illustrated below, pp. 99, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Important were it only as incidental proof of the genuineness of *Acts* through “undesigned evidence” with *Acts* viii. 5–7.

ance,—of Paul's eager wistfulness of love's labour to comfort the Corinthians now mourning under his rebukes. It is only toward the close of his "greatest" Epistle (cp. Gal. vi. 11), after its great and weighty matters have been all expounded, that, as it were in "a sentence after the last," of modestly self-depreciatory introduction to strangers, we now see, what must long have been well known to all the nascent Christendom westward of Jerusalem, namely, that Paul—whose every step through all these years we have been following—was himself a miracle-worker all through the varied round of them. And in particular, it—very strikingly—is in a like seemingly accidental way that, in all but the last parting word of his long intercourse with Corinth, *we* come to know about his having—in a manner that well might shake awake (Eph. v. 14) the whole dead Roman empire of that west,—a very few years ago inaugurated the intercourse, in his founding the Corinthian Christianity, with a campaign of miracle-working, probably the greatest, excepting the campaigns of Moses in Egypt and of Jesus in Palestine, that the world has ever seen.

It thus appears that no cursory surface reader of the *Acts* and *Epistles* can be aware of, what becomes clear on close inspection of these four Epistles, the *affluent* fulness with which definite belief in miracle must have then been in strong possession of the mind, not only of all Christians, but, no doubt, of many heathens around them.

3. *Calm sobriety of judgment*, on the part of those Christians, relatively to the subject of miracle, is, we saw, presumable from that apostolic manner of alluding to the subject. The allusions are *called for* by occasions arising. If Peter, in one of his Epistles (2 Pet. i. 16–18), makes one allusion to miracle, it is on the emergent occasion of his having at this point to lay great stress (cp. 1 John i. 1–3) on the historical trustworthiness of the apostolic testimony regarding "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul's allusion to Satanic miracles (2 Thess. ii. 9), in all but the earliest of his Epistles, is important for his practical purpose (cp. Eph. vi. 12, etc.) of early forearming the Church through forewarning her at the outset of her militant career;—as also was Christ's own allusion (Matt. xxiv. 24) to miracles of the false



prophets and false Christs, and as will be John's apocalyptic allusions (Rev. xiii. 12, 13, xvi. 14) to miracles of the second Beast. The only epistolary allusion (Heb. ii. 4) to apostolic miracle other than those in the "unquestionable" four (say, A.D. 68) would not be regarded as out of place or time in a pastoral address to Christians in our own day and land. Nowhere is there any appearance of dragging in the subject of miracle, or harping on it, as if under influence of exaggerating fanatical excitement (with reference to craving for miracle as mere "wonder," see 1 Cor. i. 22).

In the four Epistles, that character of presumable calm sobriety in this relation, is remarkably sustained. The allusions in every case are distinctly for an emergent occasion. Gal. iii. 15 has the effect of clinching Paul's great argument at the very hinge of the crisis of the justification controversy. Of the supernatural operations at Corinth, he *has* to speak, for correction of perilous as well as very shameful abuse of the spiritual gifts of God. The tenderness which appears at 2 Cor. xii. 12, 13, toward those who had sinned in this and other matters, is characteristic of the apostle whom Renan describes as the greatest of all spiritual directors; while at the same time the skilfulness of a veteran soldier of Jesus Christ may have suggested that such an allusion to miracle, while serving the kindly purpose immediately in view, was fitted, as it has served, for ulterior accomplishment of a higher effect in connection with the whole campaign of Christianity. So of the allusion at Rom. xv. 18, 19. Nobly following up Rom. i. 8-14, it *has* to be made somehow, for self-introduction of Paul as an accredited ambassador of Christ; and, made as it is on this occasion, it abidingly strengthens the new heart of the empire of the world.

Not only Paul is not exercised about the wonders merely as wonders (1 Cor. i. 22; cp. Luke xviii. 8). Evidently, the newly-born Christian community has them in its mind only in a rational manner; such that *the Christian* mind (1 Cor. i. 23) is not carried away by fascination of mere wonderfulness from the spiritual interest of that "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," which are the great and weighty matters of the kingdom of God. A community settled on the slopes of a volcanic mountain is ordinarily occupied, not

with aimless talking about eruptions past or present, but with the daily industries of shepherding, farming, gardening,—though their life be under pervasively controlling *influence* of belief in reality of eruptions. Such a view of the mental condition of the Christians addressed in these Epistles is suggested by the character of the few allusions to miracle in the Epistles. Occurring as the allusions do,—incidentally, as in a passing “word to the wise,”—the view they suggest is that, while the Christian mind of the time was settled in full belief in the reality of miracles, yet among Christians they were not much nor frequently the subject of either ordinary conversation or distinct reflection.

4. As to *bearing on gospel history*.—The thus “unquestionable” fact, of universal Christian belief in contemporary miracle, placed the apostles on a solid ground of advantage as witnesses regarding the preceding ministry of Jesus. Their own miracle-working power is now believed in, as a matter of present-day experience in the first entrance of the new kingdom into this or that locality. To every locality the entrance has been as a great stream, coming down into this present from a still recent past, of fontal outpouring of miraculous “power” from on high, at a Pentecost in sight of this generation, as Lebanon is in sight of Canaan. The very purpose of the working in this present has all been, to carry men’s minds back to that past so recent,—a past in which apostles, men still in the prime of life, “from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word” (Luke i. 2 ; cp. 1 John i. 3 ; 2 Pet. i. 16). There now can be on their part no difficulty in recollecting main plain facts, of “that which they have seen and heard,” as when some of them were with Jesus on the holy mount. And to the first generation of Christians under their instruction, believing in their miracles, so far from there being insuperable difficulty in believing in miracles of Jesus, rather would there not have been sheer impossibility of believing, that the Master had *not* done such wonderful works as now are being done by His servants ?

The question, *how there came to be* a first generation of believers, prepared to live and die “for the name” of the Lord Jesus, unless there was miraculous proof of the

religion at its original founding,—is outside of our present inquiry.

Adhering to our present subject, we ask, How would *Matthew, Mark, Luke*, say, before A.D. 70, appear to a church like that of Corinth, now sixteen years of age? She believes in the Old Testament with its wonders, in the transcendent miracle of Christ's resurrection, and in apostolic miracles now being worked, including, on the part of the prince-apostle of the Gentiles in a protracted residence here at Corinth, a most memorable campaign of miracle-working at her own so recent founding; while in her communion there have since been extraordinary supernatural operations copious all but to unmanageableness. Would not a Synoptist run some risk of rejection in that community on account of the quiet naturalness of his supernaturalism,—making his wonders to be too little wonderful, not strong enough in sensationalism, for the Corinthian taste?

But the question bears not only on specialties of one church. The Gentile churches generally, in like manner, had fresh living memory (cp. Gal. iv. 13–15) of a quite recent time, some few years back at furthest, when the inaugural "signs, and wonders, and mighty works," broke in as an awakening earthquake or a resurrection thunderstorm (see Eph. v. 14) on their old heathen sleep of death. And they, relatively to possibility and likelihood of miracles of Christ the Son of God, would—after such (as they believed) experience of apostolic miracle—hardly need to reason in order to stand in the conclusion, that in respect of supernaturalism surely the servant-apostle is not above his Lord.

Nor must we forget the commanding force of definite belief in miracle that was operative—above all, as on a Lebanon summit—in the mind and heart of *the apostles themselves*, and of their associates in the propagandism. Is it to be supposed that such a man as Paul,—that such associates as Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Mark, Apollos,—were all under a lifelong plague of *physical* as well as of spiritual blindness, incapable of perceiving plain matters of fact, within their personal knowledge or easily ascertainable by them? If not, then in our day is it not a proof of strong delusion (John ix. 39), constituting incapacity for historical

judgment,<sup>1</sup> that any one should doubt as to the reality of what *they* so believed in? In that middle-apostolic age, had *the apostles* a definite belief in miracle, as a fact whose reality was attested by evidence of their bodily senses? If not, then how are we to account for those allusions to miracle in every one of the four "unquestionable" Epistles of Paul? And *otherwise* —— ? (see Matt. xii. 28).

### SEC. 3. *Apologetics in Pauline Practice and in Petrine Prescription.*

Though all the apostles were Christ's ambassadors to "all nations," the mission that specially fell to "the Twelve" was (Gal. ii. 8) "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Outside of Palestine, from the time of the Jerusalem Synod, in Scripture we see almost nothing of *their* personal work of planting and upbuilding Christianity among mankind: though we know (1 Pet. i. 1; Jas. i. 1) that they specially addressed themselves to Jews of the dispersion, and<sup>2</sup> may suppose that the special theatre of their propagandism was, eastward from Palestine, among the Semitic populations where home-bred Palestinians like the Twelve would be half at home, and in whose Euphrates regions (see 1 Pet. v. 13), the original cradle of the Abrahamites, Jews of the dispersion were at this time peculiarly numerous.<sup>3</sup> But regarding the presumable manner of their proceeding we are not without means of judging.

In addressing Jews on behalf of Christianity, the apostles did not in the first instance speak as to outside unbelievers. Rather (see Acts xxvi. 6, 7) they spoke somewhat in the manner of Luther and other reformers addressing the Christian peoples of western Christendom,—peoples professedly holding the catholic Christian faith. In the name and on behalf of the faith which those peoples professed, the reformers exhorted them to abandon the mediævalism now called Popery as an innovating corruption of that faith. So at the great Pentecost the Jews addressed were in a sense believers, even professing Christians. That is to say, their Old Testament faith was *Messiahism* (which is Hebrew for the religion of the

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *criticism*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 71, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Ewald, *History of Israel*.



“anointed,” as *Christianity* is Greek for it). The original apostles (see John i. 35, etc.), may conceivably—excepting “the son of perdition”—have been thus believing Christians of the Old Testament before they embraced the New Testament Messiahism (see Acts xvii. 3) in Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>1</sup> Not improbably a large and most valuable part of the membership of the original apostolic church consisted of individuals who thus had been born again within the Old Testament Church communion (see John iii. 10; cp. i. 11–13). It was only (see Matt. v. 10–12; Acts xiii. 46, xxviii. 24–28) after trial by the gospel, of those professedly looking for Christ, whether they now would receive the Messiah who had come (cp. Deut. viii. 3), that non-believing Jews came to be held as simply outside of God’s kingdom like Gentile heathens (see Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9).

Paul, while accepting (Eph. iii. 8) his own special mission as to the Gentiles, for which he was uniquely qualified, as being the only apostle who was a citizen of the Gentile world, yet went with his message “to the Jew first” (Rom. i. 16), who (Acts xv. 21), with his synagogue, was to be found at the centres of population, even in those Japhetic western lands which proved to be the predestined<sup>2</sup> theatre of the Pauline propagandism. There thus was resumed, in his dealing with the Jews, the substance of what for our purpose is to be noted in the earlier ministry of the original apostles. And also and especially, in his grand campaign as apostle of the Gentiles (Acts ix. 15), we see at full length the whole “case for Christianity,” as laid before the civilised mankind of the west by that great apostle who, through western culture, and perhaps by native cast of mind, has most of affinity to the modern Japhetic peoples,—*e.g.* in their “critical” tendency (see 1 Thess. v. 21; 1 Cor. x. 15) to put matters to the test of reason.

<sup>1</sup> The late Dr. Lindsay Alexander—*Anglo-Catholicism not Apostolical*—held that not improbably Paul was truly such a Christian when persecuting Christ.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Acts* it appears that every main course of Paul’s action, on to the very last, was taken under *express* instructions from God: he went always *as directed*.

THE PAULINE PRACTICE.—1. *Appeal to the Old Testament.*—"Straightway" after Paul's conversion, "he preached Jesus in the synagogue" (of Damascus) "that He is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20), and again (ver. 22), "he confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ" (cp. Matt. xvi. 16-20; John xx. 31). The divine Sonship of Messiah had been made a point of Old Testament revelation by Jesus Himself (Matt. xxii. 41-45) in His last act of public teaching in the temple, immediately before His final farewell.<sup>1</sup> And His claiming divinity of nature as well as Messiahship of office was the ground of His condemnation to death as a blasphemer by the Jewish council (Matt. xxvi. 63-66). It was (John xix. 7; cp. Matt. xxvii. 18)—they perhaps thought—the real cause of the pressure they put on Pilate, with a lying accusation and with suborned false witness, for the judicial murder of the sinless One, whom they and Pilate knew to be innocent of the civil offence laid against Him. It was the thing for which He "witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate" (1 Tim. vi. 13), and died as "the faithful martyr" (Rev. i. 5) on the cross. It thus appears that Paul, in his Damascus beginning, raised a banner for the essential foundation doctrine of Christianity.

*Paul's apologetic was only for that gospel* (1 Cor. i. 22-24; Rom. i. 16, 17) regarding Jesus, the son of Mary, namely, that He is the Saviour Son of God.<sup>2</sup> A defence *ignoring* that "gospel" would be inconceivable to him (see Gal. i. 8). His whole theologising ran into unfolding of what is folded in the personal and official glory of the Crucified One (Gal. ii. 20, vi. 14); and all his (1 Cor. ii. 1) "preaching" consisted in application of the doctrine, that salvation, in God's redeeming love, is offered freely to all sinners as the purchase of Immanuel's sufferings unto death,—pardon and acceptance, the lawful way of life in peace with God, thus being a gift of divine free grace, on the ground of God's own righteousness in Christ. And Paul maintained (Gal. ii.; cp. Acts xv. 11, etc.) that this "gospel," received by him independently in

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> "Liberty of conscience," "rights of man," came only in the train of that (Acts iv. 19, 20). The direct appropriate "defence" was of "the gospel" (Phil. i. 7, 17).

revelation from Christ, was in substance—of free salvation for mankind in the Saviour Son of God—what the original apostles had from the beginning delivered as from the Lord. *The thing defended*, and commended to men's reason, in the apostolic apologetics, thus was "evangelical" Christianity.

Paul's next recorded appearance as teacher was in that first great missionary journey (Acts xiii., xiv.) which was the beginning of the evangelisation of the Gentile world,—a work that still is in progress at this hour. There at the outset we see him (Acts xiii.) in "the synagogue of the Jews," "preaching the word of God." This in its apologetic bearing is expounded (Acts xvii. 3) in a note on the second great missionary journey, with reference to Paul's wonted "*manner*" (in the synagogues), to the effect that in Berea, addressing Jews, he opened and alleged, (1) that the Christ must needs have suffered and risen from the dead;<sup>1</sup> and (2) that the Jesus whom he preached to them was the Christ. He thus may have assumed the divine Sonship of Messiah as an acknowledged point of Old Testament revelation, and may have had some occasion to deal with a "heretical" construction of the Old Testament that was to be found among Jews, to the effect that the coming One was not to be a humiliation Christ (Rom. ix. 32) *as well as* an exaltation Christ. But the point for us to mark,—as expressly intimated,—is, that habitually, in his commendation of the gospel to Jews, he built "on the foundation . . . of the prophets" (Eph. ii. 20), in order to place his converts on "the foundation of the apostles . . . Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." In other words, *the apostolic apologetics found proof of Christianity in the Old Testament*: a proof which, if real, must be valid for Gentiles, *e.g.* as constituted by the miracle of Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Jesus and His work.

Of what we may suppose to have been those addresses of Paul "as his manner was" in the synagogue, the only recorded sample is (Acts xiii. 16–41) the report of what he said, in course of the first great missionary journey, in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch. It may be compared with Peter's address at the great Pentecost to Jews from "every nation

<sup>1</sup> R.V. has, "that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead" (cp. Luke xxiv. 25–27; 1 Pet. i. 10–12).

under heaven,"<sup>1</sup> and with Stephen's address to Jews at his martyrdom,—an address which may appear to have made an indelible impression on the theological mind of "a young man whose name was Saul."<sup>2</sup> We do not know whether the report is full, nor what subsequent discussion there may have been on the occasion. But in it we observe, here again in Paul's procedure, the general fact, that *the apostles found Christ in the Old Testament, and adduced this finding as a proof of Christianity.*

In so dealing with Jews, they assumed the divinity of Old Testament revelation. This on their part implied divinity of Old Testament *Scripture*, and (cp. Matt. v. 17–20) its abiding authority in the new dispensation as a rule of faith to Christians. The apostle of the Gentiles holds to this "foundation" no less firmly (Rom. iii. 2; 2 Tim. iii. 15–17) than the apostle of the circumcision (1 Pet. iv. 11; 2 Pet. i. 19–21; see iii. 15, 16). The position thus assumed by them in dealing with Jews and with their own converts, involved for them a necessity of maintaining before all mankind, not only the truth of Christianity unfolding out of Judaism, but the divinity of Old Testament revelation, and of the Old Testament record of that revelation. But the position, while thus exposing a wide surface to assault, was one of great defensive strength in two respects:—1. Generally, the two dispensations, meeting in Christ, thus have the strength which the two sides of an arch have through *uniting* in the key-stone; and,—2. in particular, while the old dispensation thus has proof of its divinity in being shown to be prophecy fulfilled, at the same time (John vi. 27) the new is "sealed" of God in being visibly the fulfilment of prophecy.

2. *Apostolic Miracle* (Acts ii. 43, v. 12, viii. 5–7).—In Paul's ministry this does not come distinctly into view until he is seen dealing separately with Gentiles (Acts xiii. 11).

<sup>1</sup> Peter (Acts ii. 22) appealed to miracles done by Jesus in the course of His ministry. Peter and many of his hearers had been eye-witnesses of these. Paul refers *only to the resurrection miracle*, of which (1 Cor. xv. 8) he was personally an eye-witness. But Peter, too (see Acts i. 22), made the resurrection miracle to be the crowning proof—*instar omnium*.

<sup>2</sup> See *Cilicia*, Acts viii. 9; cp. Acts ix. 5. Theologians find the distinctively Pauline type of doctrine anticipated in the protomartyr's dying testimony.



A clear sample is early given (Acts xiv. 1-18) in the narrative of proceedings after the gospel has been openly rejected by the Jews in Pisidian Antioch. First, generally, with reference to the bold speaking in the Lord at Iconium,—those Jews now being banded open adversaries,—it is stated that He “gave testimony unto the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their (the evangelists’) hands”: where appears distinctly the *evidential* office of miracle as proof of doctrine; while we also perceive the relation in which that office is peculiarly important, namely, to the case of those for whose conviction the *authority* of the Old Testament is not available, inasmuch as *they* (cp. Acts xxvi. 27) do not believe it.<sup>1</sup> Then, particularly, at Lystra (vers. 8, etc.) there is fully detailed the individual case of the man impotent from birth. Here the miracle-working, which is to be a rational ground of believing, is preceded by, as it were, a provisional testing<sup>2</sup> of the man’s inward spiritual condition for receiving the temporal benefit he needs. But for us at present the essential point here is (cp. John vi. 26), that the purpose of the miracle is, not merely temporal benefit, but proof of gospel doctrine.

In the second great missionary journey, when it has reached westward into Europe (Acts xvi. 10-xix.), that use of miracle, as of artillery in battles and sieges, is seen (Rom. xv. 18, 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12) along the whole extent of the campaign of Christianity. It is in the Pauline plan of campaign to settle for some time at this or that great centre of population, which would be suitable as a centre of radiation into surrounding localities in the region. Thus, first, there was a year and a half’s Corinthian residence, on the bridge-way of the Roman world’s perpetual movement between east and west;<sup>3</sup> to be followed, when (see Acts xvi. 6, 7) matters were

<sup>1</sup> But (Acts x. 34-43) thoughtful heathens, with time for reflection, could see and feel the force of *the argument* for the New Testament from the Old.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. (Acts iii.) Peter’s dealing with a similar case of impotency at Jerusalem; and the second Cana miracle (John iv. 50), as contrasted with the first Cana miracle (chap. ii. 1-11).

<sup>3</sup> See footnote on *isthmus*, above, p. 83.

ripe for it, by a three years' Asian residence that centred in Ephesus (see Rom. i. 11, ii.—iii.); and finally (see Acts xix. 21; Rom. i. 13), in various respects most memorable of all, a protracted residence in prison (Cæsarean and Roman), with influences widely radiant,<sup>1</sup> bearing seeds of blessing for all peoples through all time. Corinth, Ephesus, Rome were strategically the true commanding positions in the whole theatre of Paul's campaigning westward from Jerusalem; and it is in connection with them that there comes fully into view his apologetic employment of miracle in proof of doctrine,—particularly through demonstration of apostolic mission from God in Christ.

Before that time (Acts xvii.), on the way round the coast of Greece from Philippi to Corinth, at Berea and Thessalonica he reasoned with Jews on the ground of Old Testament revelation, and at Athens with Gentiles (esp. his dealing with Gentiles at Lystra, Acts xiv.) on the ground of nature's light shining through creative and providential works of God, and in the constitution of man,—apparently referring to no supernatural proof of religion beyond what is constituted by Christ's resurrection. But "the signs of an apostle" had appeared at Philippi. And in connection with the three strategic centres we note particulars as follows:—

1. *At Corinth*<sup>2</sup> he at the outset (1 Cor. xv. 4–8) not only reasoned with Jews from the Old Testament, but laid full out before men that transcendent resurrection miracle, citing an array of competent witnesses in proof of its historical reality.<sup>3</sup> Also—a fact, like the preceding, of which the historian in Acts makes no mention—(2 Cor. xii. 12) for attestation of his apostleship, which at the same time was by implication a proof of Christianity, in that community he laboured through a whole campaign of "signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds," which are "the signs of an apostle"—his badge of office. (N.B.—Some

<sup>1</sup> "The word of God was not bound," 2 Tim. ii. 9—witness "the prison Epistles"; as when, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, myriads of immortal Bunyans went forth evangelising from Bedford gaol. The plan of Paul's campaign was not his own (Acts xx. 22); the hero of that epic was Providence (conformably to Seeley's prescription).

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 83, 87.

<sup>3</sup> At that time, within twenty years of the event, the *Corinthian Jews*, keenly hating the gospel, could easily test the good faith of that citation, by making inquiry about the matter through connections in Palestine.

six years after, he stated this in a public letter, which the hostile Corinthian Jews could see.)

2. At Ephesus, "Asia's" famous capital, he laboured more than twice as long as at Corinth. Asia Minor was, through generations after the apostolic age, a head centre of powerful spiritual influences—good and evil—to all the Christian world. And as for Ephesus with its region—"Asia"—the deep and far-reaching influence resulting from the Pauline labours there is evidenced monumentally, not only by the history in *Acts*, but by *Ephesians*, 1 and 2 *Timothy*, and the apocalyptic *Letters to the Seven Asian Churches*, beginning with Ephesus, their chief. But it is only, as it were, incidentally<sup>1</sup> that Scripture makes us aware of the great part that was played by miracle in that Ephesian campaign.

At Acts xix. 11 we read, "God wrought *special miracles* by the hands of Paul": where we note that the human miracle-worker is organ of deity. What we dwell on here is, the "special miracles" (*dynamis* = "works of power": R.V. in margin has "powers"). The "special"—*ou tas tuchousas*—means literally "those not meeting you" (every day). They were not everyday miracles. They were uncommon—*peculiarly* "notable" (Acts iv. 16)—even in that region of supernaturalism: whether in respect of magnitude of individual works of wonder, or in respect of a peculiar affluence in the number of such works done at this one point of time (cp. Acts ii. 43, v. 12–16, viii. 5–7). The point of time was critical in the history of God's kingdom, not only at that great capital, but also and consequently for "Asia," for Asia Minor,<sup>2</sup> for that eastern world,—and, as we now know, for Christendom through all time. And now, to meet the emergency of the crisis, for the final storming of that stronghold of Satan's Anatolian kingdom, for decisive turning of the tide of spiritual warfare (see Eph. vi. 12, etc.) in those regions,—there is here brought into operation an overwhelmingly concentrated outpouring of wonders evidential.

Here we note an implication, not of *rareness* of miracle in Paul's ordinary course of labours, but of its *frequency*,—even, so to speak, to commonness (see 1 Sam. iii. 1). The history of a modern mission to the heathen does not put on record of every Lord's day the fact of preaching the gospel, or of ringing a bell before service;—for that is not "special," above the plane of

<sup>1</sup> As to the significance of this *incidental* character of allusions to miracle, see above, pp. 87–88.

<sup>2</sup> The names "Asia Minor" and "Anatolia," for those regions, of which this "Asia" was one, did not come into use until ages long after the apostolic.

ordinary occurrence. But the first opening of a mission, or the occurrence of a trial of strength with heathenism in a great public debate, is put on record in the chronicle of occurrences. So here "special miracles" implies, that in the general course of Pauline labours miracle-working is of such everyday occurrence, that ordinarily the occurrence does not fall to be chronicled by Luke.<sup>1</sup>

3. *At Rome* we find no miracle-working on the part of "the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1, vi. 20). "An ambassador in bonds," his part now is "to suffer for the sake" of Christ (Phil. i. 13, 16, 29).

Otherwise, is he not represented there by the great Epistle he sent thither several years ago?—not to speak of 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, and 1 and 2 *Thessalonians*: Epistles which (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16), owned as sacred Scripture by Peter at the historical Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13), are no doubt read with eager interest by many in John's mystical Babylon. And in their own *Romans* (xv. 15–20) this throned witness (Matt. xix. 28) is self-introduced to them with the miracle "signs of an apostle": modestly, "as his manner was," but ("as his manner was") quite effectually for his working purpose, namely, to place beyond all question his authority as (bonds or no bonds) an apostolic ambassador of Christ,—at a turning-point where the maintenance of Paul's apostolic standing, with power of right to speak (2 Cor. v. 20) as from God in Christ, is vitally important for stability of the existing Christendom of believers, and also, consequently, for the salvation of an unbelieving world. "I have," he there says (R.V.), "therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. For I will not dare to speak of any things save *those which Christ wrought through me*, for the obedience of the Gentiles, *by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost*: so that *from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum*, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."<sup>2</sup> Consequently, miracle-working at Rome would perhaps be superfluous.

This (Rom. xv. 15, etc.) was written, we will suppose,

<sup>1</sup> This, collated with Rom. xv. 18, 19, and 2 Cor. xii. 12, 13—see above, pp. 82, 83—makes a good case of that "undesigned coincidence," whose apologetic value is so memorably illustrated by Paley, *Horæ Paulinæ*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 82.



from Corinth, at the time of his final visit to that strategic centre (say, A.D. 59). By this time his circuit of propagandist operations had—perhaps in a radiation from Corinth at the time of his protracted labour there—reached as far as to the coast of the Adriatic Sea: across whose waters he thus may have been looking towards Italy, when there first arose in his heart the thought, “I must see Rome also” (Acts xix. 21; cp. Rom. i. 9–13, and further, Rom. xv. 24, 28). But our present point here is in *the fact*, that his whole round of propagandist labour was marked by miracle most unmistakable, as credential attestation of his teaching, for the founding of God’s kingdom among mankind in belief of gospel truth. That belief thus was planted in men’s minds by means of this external evidence addressing itself to the common reason of mankind. *This external evidence thus is at the “foundation” of the historical Christendom as appearing in the apostolic church.*

Now, taking a conjoint view of the particulars of Scripture testimony regarding the Pauline appeal to miracle, we perceive as a general fact, that *the actual working of the wonders was in the initial process*, of planting or founding the church. *In the ulterior process*, of watering or upbuilding, *what appears* is not, a continuation of the miracle-working, but, as occasion emerges, *a side-reference to the remembered working of miracles* that signalised this church’s founding, or (gospel history—see 2 Pet. i. 16) the original introduction of Christianity into the world. The raising of Eutychus (Acts xx. 10) is a case in point for showing that in a formed church there might be meet occasion for a distinct apostolic miracle; and it may be supposed that whatever kind of evidential supernaturalism had place in the Corinthian, spiritual gifts continued with the formed church beyond the middle-apostolic age.<sup>1</sup> But the general fact on the record is as we have stated, that *in the formed church what remained was the memory of mighty works done at the founding of Christianity.*

For evidential purposes, the memory of such working was logically equivalent to the sight of it; miracle in remembrance

<sup>1</sup> Origen describes what resembles operation of those gifts within his knowledge in the third century, but there is not historical evidence of real continuance of them through the first century into the second.

(Rom. i. 4) has the same light of proof as miracle in performance (John xx. 28),—once the mighty work is done, its testimony remains (witness the *Psalms*) for all generations, like the shining of a star once placed in the firmament. And for the purpose of edification—through such exercise as that of Sturm's *Reflections on the Works of God* (cp. Heb. i. 10)—His "glory" as "manifested" in His wondrous works,—the memory of Egypt and the wilderness is<sup>1</sup> what He gave to Israel in Canaan. Accordingly, in the ordinary working of the primeval formed Christian mind, as occasionally reflected in the apostolic Epistles, miracle had no place nor part except through memory; and the place and part it thus had (through memory) in the middle-apostolic age, it for substance continues to hold (through memory) in the formed Christian mind of churches at this present hour (allowing for difference in distance of the things remembered).

*The internal evidence*, about which Paul wrote so powerfully (1 Cor. ii. ; 2 Cor. iii. 14—iv. 6) at the time of his only known writings about miracle, does not appear to have been appealed to in the primary apologetics of the apostolic propagandism:—if indeed it could be so employed,—i.e. before there was a formed church in the locality, and presupposing, as it does, in those whom it addresses, a spiritual mind for apprehension of the inward spiritual character of the religion, while the primary apologetics has to address itself to the common reason of mankind.<sup>2</sup> But the "experimental" evidence that is constituted by the rising of God's new kingdom in the world, and specially the moral character of the citizens, begins to come distinctly into view in the middle-apostolic age (2 Cor. iii. 2, 3; Eph. ii. 7; cp. 1 Pet. ii. 9); though from the nature of the case it could have no prominence in the primary apologetics at the founding of the kingdom. How it might be quietly working, as a leaven that leaveneth the lump, we shall have occasion to consider in connection with the post-apostolic church life.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of the *internal evidence* is, in pursuance of the general plan referred to in the Introduction to the present work, dealt with in the writer's companion work, *The Revelation and the Record*.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE on the apostolic testimony from personal experience. It is uniquely conspicuous in Paul's ministry (see Acts ix., xxii., xxvi., etc.), where it has unique importance: such that, *e.g.*, Paul's conversion to the religion he had persecuted is itself made a leading proof of its truth. But the other apostles also "found" on their personal knowledge of Christ on earth (1 Pet. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 16-18; 1 John i. 1-3; cp. John xix. 35—see Luke i. 2). Their evidence has a peculiar value, as being virtually the evidence of their *bodily senses*. Paul *saw* the risen Christ (1 Cor. xv. 8, ix. 1). Peter's "declaration" is that of an "eye-witness" who heard "the voice out of the excellent glory." John, the "spiritual" apostle, lays even greater stress on the evidence of the bodily senses. It thus is not only that those wise and good men are persuaded of the truth of this religion. Nor is it only that, being inspired of God, they cannot be mistaken about its doctrinal meaning. Over and above these things,—they have personally witnessed plain facts, with such unmistakable clearness (Acts iv. 20), that, since the matter is infinitely important, it is impossible for them to be silent about those facts: rather than not declare them, they will suffer imprisonment or death. Now those plain facts are (Luke i. 2; John xx. 30, 31) the facts in the earthly career of Christ, especially its miracles (Acts ii. 22, x. 38), and above all (Acts i. 22; 1 Cor. ix. 1) the crowning miracle of His resurrection. *There effectively is nothing in the Scripture history of His ministry but what they saw and heard.* THEIR EYES AND EARS ARE THE ONLY INFORMANTS OF MANKIND REGARDING IT UNTIL HIS SECOND COMING (see Rev. i. 7 and 2 Cor. v. 10-20).

THE PETRINE PRESCRIPTION (1 Pet. iii. 15).—It is understood that John settled in Ephesus after Paul's final departure from that Asian field, perhaps about A.D. 65: that sun thus rising in the East when Paul's (whose martyrdom may be placed at A.D. 67) was gloriously setting in the West (2 Tim. iv. 7). It is remarkable that John's (John xx. 30, 31) is the only one of the Gospels (cp. Luke i. 4) that is expressly and avowedly *apologetic* in its purpose. Though its record of *discourses* of Jesus may have gone far to procure for its author the title of "The Theologian" (or "Divine": *theologos* = "one who speaks of God") on account of his peculiar clearness of witness-bearing for the Godhead of Christ,—yet it is (John xxi. 25) "of things that Jesus *did*" (cp. John ii. 11) that this Gospel itself professes to be a record; and it is noteworthy (John xx. 30, 31) that it is only *the miracles*

("signs") of Jesus that the evangelist expressly specifies as constituting in his record a foundation for our "believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," so that "believing we may have life in His name."

John's Epistles make no allusion to miracle; while the two or three allusions to miracle in *The Apocalypse* are to fatally misleading miracles of the second Beast.<sup>1</sup> It may thus appear that continuation of true miracles after the apostolic age was not in the plan of Christianity. And—*e.g.* considering the vividness of Johannine representation of the state of Asian Christianity at Rev. i.—iii.—we may hold as historically clear that the Christian mind of the closing period of that century was no more exercised about the subject than it appears to have been in the formed churches of the Petro-Pauline period,—that is (as we saw) no more than it ordinarily is or may be in churches of our own day. But, on the other hand, the pronouncedly apologetic purpose of John's Gospel would on this view seem to imply that apology, laying great stress on miracle, may be quietly at work, serving a profoundly important purpose, even for the soul's life in the divine Redeemer's name, though the subject should not, in ordinary life of faith, be frequently or much on the surface of the general Christian mind of the Church (cp. the expression, men's "having *the work of the law* written on their hearts," Rom. ii. 15).

The suggestion thus arising is corroborated by Peter's clear and distinct prescription of apology. This is the only scriptural prescription of apology to (1 Pet. i. 1, 2, 21) *the commonalty* of believers. The Lord's prescription, at Luke xii. 12 and xxi. 14, regarding apology by name was, if spoken in

<sup>1</sup> This puts a copestone on the preceding refutation (pp. 77-92) of the view, that the Christian mind of the closing-apostolic age was a hot-bed of origination of belief in miracle, by further showing that that mind was much less exercised about miracle in the later-apostolic age than it had been toward the beginning of that age. The demonstration would have been cogent though the Johannine Scriptures had been forgeries; for still they would have shown what, *immediately after* the apostolic age, was by Christians believed to have been the condition of the Christian mind at the close of that age,—namely, a condition all but of *seeming indifference to the subject* of miracle. We otherwise know that there was no *real* indifference to it.



hearing of a general audience of followers, yet addressed specially and in the first instance to His chosen disciples, the future apostles. (Besides, the "apology" in that prescription is not exclusively nor primarily a "reasoning" *in proof* of the religion.) And it is to apostolic action primarily, though not exclusively,—it is to some official or extraordinary procedure,—that there is reference in the Pauline Epistles and in *Acts* where they speak of apologetic practice. Apology as an office of ordinary Christians or of common Christian life is referred to in Scripture only at 1 Pet. iii. 15 (cp. Isa. xliii. 10).

In the interest of "Christianity" it has been contended that those here addressed are not ordinary Christians, but official personages—priests, bishops, perhaps "angels" (Rev. ii.—iii.). And no doubt they are priests (1 Pet. ii. 1–5). But not the less (ver. 9) they are ordinary Christians (cp. Rom. xii. 1; Ex. xix. 6; Rev. i. 6), simply believers (1 Pet. i. 1), "elect sojourners of the dispersion" (see R.V.; cp. Jas. i. 1).

It may be contended or imagined that apart from Christian office there cannot be personal *qualification* for this Christian advocacy. But that is not suggested by experience, nor by the ostensible nature of the case. A lawyer like Tertullian or Lord Hailes, or a philosopher like Justin Martyr or John Locke, may be able to write an apology for Christianity though he be neither bishop, priest, nor deacon. And what makes the value of Origen's *Answer to Celsus* may be, not his holding office as master of a Christian school, but his being a Christian of masterly ability, foremost in the scholarship of his age. No doubt "a poor man's wisdom is despised," while "not many mighty" are effectually called. But a clergyman as well as a layman can have the *distraction* of great possessions (or great covetousness); and "God hath made the poor of this world rich in faith,"—which is more to the purpose; so that a Peter and a John, at the Beautiful Gate of God's temple, make a helpless poor man rich indeed, creating an apology and apologist in his person, though they are not arrayed in priestly "vestments," and silver and gold have they none.

"Clear your mind of cant" (Dr. Johnson). If nowadays the "laity" be stricken dumb by this religion, surely it has

changed its nature since that early time, when it made the dumb to sing as well as the lame to walk, while imparting to gentle and simple a free spirit of counsel and might. And apparently that spirit is not wanting in the apologetics of Hugo Grotius or of Isaac Taylor, more than in the apologetics of a Butler and a Lightfoot, prince-bishops of Durham. Nor does it appear that Pascal's *Thoughts on Religion* would necessarily have been improved for defence of truth if he had been a bishop, like "the eagle of Meaux,"<sup>1</sup> or an archbishop, like "the dove of Cambrai";<sup>2</sup> while the Seigneur Philip Mornaix du Plessis was not disabled for drawing pen with Abaddie as well as Beza by drawing sword abreast of Coligny and Henry of Navarre.

As for the nature of the case,—In order to be qualified for apologising, it is not absolutely necessary that a Christian should be "clerical" even in the monkish mediæval sense of being able to read and write. If only he be clerical in Peter's true Christian sense (1 Pet. v. 3) of belonging to God's *klērōs*<sup>3</sup>—over which let no official play the petty usurping "lord"!—then let him try, with a cheerful "readiness," to "give answer (*apologia*) to every one that asketh a reason (*logos*) of the hope that is in him, (yet) with meekness and fear"; and he may haply find that "where there's a will there's a way." We know from sad experience that much learning and great intellectual power will not keep a man from going astray in highest things, where (John vii. 17; Ps. cxii. 4) truth is given to the simple true-hearted (see divine and human "liberality" at Jas. i. 5 and 2 Cor. ix. 7). And the plain man may be able to give "plain reasons for being a Christian"; as a common person can give good solid reason for being guided by the stars, while perhaps a transcendental "scientist"—going out of his beat—gets lost among the stars, or among *nebulae* (it may be, of his own creating).

The Samaritan woman (John iv.) had no need of schooling beyond that of Jacob's well—from one who Himself had "never learned"—to qualify her for the argumentative "apologetical narration,"—"Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" And it

<sup>1</sup> Bossuet.<sup>2</sup> Fenelon.<sup>3</sup> Greek for *heritage*.

was not human learning, such as Christ Himself had not, but only simple mother-wit or sense<sup>1</sup> that gave to the Jerusalem born-blind man (John ix.) his apology founded on the "unquestionable" fact of miracle,—“Since the world began was it not heard that any one opened the eyes of one born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” Or, if we will have it yet shorter and simpler, bringing the matter to a luminous flame-point of practical reason,—“Once I was blind, now I see”: an apologetic which was answered only with persecution, as it never can be answered with reason. He had that argument in his power, and he avoided the *crime* of another servant who had only one talent.

But and if we desire to have at our command a *course* of “evidences” for the simple, we have that from this great master, Peter himself, peculiarly endowed with the great gift of saying much in few words,—words always plain and strong, like the “shout”<sup>2</sup> of a fisherman-sailor: namely, in the Protapology (Acts ii.). We may wonder where Peter has been, and what he has been doing, since the time of his grandeur as *de facto* primate-apostle at the Jerusalem Synod, with the other Palestinian apostles as assessors; all through these ten or twelve years of Paul’s campaigning westward of Jerusalem (Acts ii. 10), “to make the Gentiles obedient” (Rom. xv. 18, 10). If Peter has been idle, he must have greatly changed. And Paul’s campaigning in the West may (ver. 20) go to show that probably Peter, and the other original apostles, seeing that (1 Cor. ix. 5) they have been somewhere in the world, have been labouring to the eastward of the Holy Land (Acts ii. 9), among their Semitic cousinhood of “kindreds, and peoples, and tongues,”—a direction in which also there was pointing from their King (Luke xxiii. 38, xxiv. 46; Acts i. 8). Peter’s last distinct appearance (Gal. ii. 10–14),—not very like that of an Enoch who “has attained, and is already perfect,”—does not suggest his now having come down from heaven like Moses and Elias, when (1 Pet. v. 13) he reappears at Babylon, the old head-centre of that eastern Semitism. But no doubt he, the born primate

<sup>1</sup> Greek *nous*, 1 Cor. x. 15.

<sup>2</sup> It was an ancient saying about this apostle, that his utterance is a shout.

(John i. 42), the prime administrator of the new kingdom (Matt. xvi. 18) all through the critical time (Acts i.-xii.) of its inaugural foundation movement, has been fully occupied through the years of his absence from our view, until he now comes back to view, as a reappearing sun, in this great Epistle for the strengthening of the brethren (Luke xxii. 32 ; cp. 1 Pet. v. 10-12). And if he strengthen them,<sup>1</sup> he at the same time here directs them, for the service of God and man, with what strength may be given to them.

In the Epistle, where he is preceptor of apology, *he does not give material* of apologetics for the people,—in other words, apology that can be handled by all *Peter's* priesthood, namely, the commonalty of believers, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Yet (1 Pet. ii. 1, 2) he now may be fully aware of the desirableness of some apologetic provision for "the simple" in that commonalty: were it only because (2 Pet. iii. 15, 16) to his apprehension Paul's Epistles, inestimably precious though they be, are not milk for babes.<sup>2</sup> Nor indeed has "the Shepherd Apostle" (as Peter was called—cp. John xxi. 15-18; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 4) failed himself to make a provision suitable for even the "lambs" of Christ. In now saying to ordinary Christians, "apologise," he does not condemn them to make bricks without straw. Though he had not now reappeared at Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13), joining hands with Paul in his prison at the mystical Babylon (Col. iv. 10 ; 2 Tim. iv. 11) through going and coming of Mark,—yet a true provision made by him is in readiness and safe keeping.

Thus,—1. In Acts (ii. and x.), Luke (Acts i. 1) has ready for publication, if he have not already published (say, *circa* A.D. 63), the *two foundation apologetic discourses*, which Peter delivered at the inauguration of this new kingdom, "to the Jew first" (Acts ii.), and (Acts x.) "also to the Greek." These two inaugural addresses of Christianity to the world, of both Jews and Gentiles, were as an opening of the door

<sup>1</sup> In the way of "strengthening the brethren" who read English, perhaps Leighton's 1 *Peter* has done more than all the 400 or 500 known extant commentaries on Paul's great *Galatians*.

<sup>2</sup> The "Pastorals" were not in existence at this time—say, A.D. 63.



(Matt. xvi. 19) of heaven's kingdom to mankind. On delivering them, Peter, effectively and in substance, laid the foundation of all future Christian apologetics. They say only, and they say all, that which needs to be said in a foundation proof of Christianity. And (as "*his manner was*") they say it with (2 Cor. iii. 12) characteristically Christian "great plainness of speech." Their great argument might easily be understood even by such an outside "laity" as Cornelius and his friends. It could be comprehended and remembered by any ordinarily intelligent common soldier in that company. In substance and even in words it thus may, within few years or months, have been repeated at camp-fires, to be pondered and prayed over in the night-watches by solitary sentinels, wide over the world, from eastern Parthian empire to the British borders of yet unconquered Caledonia: making not only Christians but qualified apologists; so that, all these years, legions of strong, simple, manly Peters, "good soldiers of Jesus Christ," may have been coming on the field where he personally was absent.

But,—2. far more important, as a Petrine contribution to apologetics, is *what we have in Mark's Gospel*. That is to say, as even Renan owns, in especial *Peter's* account of the earthly ministry of Christ. According to Papias (*circa* A.D. 125 ?), reporting what he had learned from an "elder" who, if not an apostle, had been a personal hearer of apostles, it is Mark's digest of those "teachings" which Peter was in the habit of delivering for "foundation" (1 Cor. iii. 8–15; Rom. xv. 20) of Christian churches. The history thus delivered was, in Peter's own estimation (2 Pet. i. 16), as in John's (John xx. 31; 1 John i. 3) and in Luke's (Luke i. 1–4), most important *as a foundation of apologetics*: because, *through the testimony of eye-witnesses*,<sup>1</sup> it places us face to face with the ultimate foundation proof of Christianity in the personal working and presence of Christ Himself. Those professing Christians who speak disparagingly of apology, or of apologetic use of gospel history, are thus placed in open antagonism to apostles and evangelists, to a leading ostensible purpose of the Gospels.

In Peter's Pentecostal and Cæsarean discourses, the

<sup>1</sup> See "Supplementary Note" above, p. 103.

apologetic foundation is laid in that history, of the ministry of Jesus: the facts of which (Acts ii. 22) were then well known to the Jerusalem Jews, and probably not strange to Cornelius and his like-minded friends. It was not necessary for the apostle to go into detailed particulars of those wonderful facts; as the things (Acts xxvi. 26) "were not done in a corner," but, in that land and day, took place openly before the nation (cp. Luke xxiv. 19). And now, in the four Gospels, *we* have the particulars—which then perhaps were presupposed and not specified—as in the founding of churches (Luke i. 2) they were delivered by those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word." That is what we have in *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*. And in our estimate of the value of Peter's abiding gift of "portable evidences of Christianity," we must include his contribution to gospel history; in what is distinctively the *popular* Gospel (*Mark*),—like the other Gospels intended, as it is fitted, to serve as historical foundation of primary apologetics.

*As to the terms of the prescription* (1 Pet. iii. 15).—The "readiness" for apologising, which the apostle here inculcates, may—we have seen—be attained without a man's turning aside from the ordinary course of Christian thought, in order to study of miracles, of evidences, as a separate matter from, say, gospel history. It is attainable *in* the ordinary course of Christian thought regarding that history, of revelation as recorded for our learning. Thus in the gospel history such as it is placed in our hands, for the ordinary purpose of edification—congregational and individual—we do not *see* Christ except through His "works" (John v. 36, xiv. 9–11), which in their distinctive nature are "signs," as being evidential "wonders." Not to see *these* would be<sup>1</sup> to reduce the revelation into a mere naturalism in masquerade of seeming supernaturalism. The history would thus in our hands be transmogrified into a mere cloud-land of our own imagining, in which the detailed narratives are illusory as "cunningly devised fables."<sup>2</sup> *Mythical* theorising, like a poisonous reptile

<sup>1</sup> As in *Ecce Homo*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Greek for *sophisticated myths*, 2 Pet. i. 16; cp. 1 Tim. i. 4, iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Tit. i. 14.

creeping into the young innocence of their Paradise Restored, was before the mind of the two prince-apostles, as an object of strong contemptuous aversion, when writing their last recorded words of heavenly wisdom for the churches. Men may now not give to the thing that for the present so discredited name;<sup>1</sup> but *the thing* so warned against (expressly, by name, in *every one* of Paul's Pastoral Epistles, as well as in 1 *Peter*) is *in existence* wherever, on the part of a professing Christian or of an avowed infidel, the historical reality of miracle, or of its grand purpose to prove doctrine, is ignored or explained away.

The state of professedly Christian mind which finds vent in disparagement of apologetics, as a thing only for a crude condition or for a low type of spiritual intelligence, is thus seen to be falsetto or unhealthy<sup>2</sup> at the very core. Every citizen ought no doubt to give diligence to the work of his own particular calling, wherein specially it is that *he* is called to serve the common-weal. But that man is no good citizen, and he gives no proof of "good sense,"<sup>3</sup> who goes about proclaiming that the military defences of the city ought to be neglected by superior persons, and that care or painstaking about them shows a low order of mind. But in the present case the city is, in the first instance, a man's own soul,<sup>4</sup> as dependent for its life on faith in God through Christ. In the city of Mansoul, a decadence of the towers, and bulwarks, and embattled walls, which guard the faith, is in progress wherever the professedly Christian mind is not habitually under influence of supernatural attestation of Christianity.<sup>5</sup> An American humorist has suggested as ideally possible that a Christian minister, in consequence of thoughtlessness in routine performance of preaching duty, should come to perish for lack of knowledge. What we now have in view is the real possibility (see Heb. xii. 15, 16) of a professedly Christian teacher's coming to perish through lack of *positive belief*, in consequence of disregarding *the rational grounds* of belief,

<sup>1</sup> *Mythos*, Greek for "fable."

<sup>2</sup> Mark, in the *Pastoral Epistles*, the value assigned to "soundness"—the theme of so much derision in certain Christian (?) circles.

<sup>3</sup> English for *orthodoxy*.

<sup>4</sup> Bunyan, *Holy War*.

<sup>5</sup> So Baxter found in experience—see above, Prefatory Note.

which are essential in the substance of the religion as historically real, so that when they are disregarded the religion in its reality is not apprehended.

So as to the professedly Christian community. They have to be trained *for this Christian duty*. If really Christian, they will not away with a perpetual disputatious harping on external evidences, as if they were infidels or heathens, needing to be argued into Christianity once a week.<sup>1</sup> Peter (1 Pet. v. 1, etc.), in his kindly winning manner, reminds the under-shepherds that the Redeemer's flock is not to be driven but led, even as it is not to be fleeced but fed. But if it *be* fed, led to the green pastures by the still waters,—the miraculous attestations of religion in substance have to be there,<sup>2</sup> as essential in that substance (cp. John ii. 11). Express and formal demonstration of the truth of religion, as a separate thing from practical exposition and application of its truths, may—so to speak—be left out in the lobby of the church. But the pastor who does not see to it that the evidential signs and wonders on record of Scripture are noted and comprehended by the flock in their significance as proof of the religion,—*does he* expound them or apply them according to their nature as set forth in Scripture itself?—does he in this matter take the Bible for his “only rule of . . . practice”? Is he a real follower (1 Cor. xi. 1) of that “shepherd apostle” who here is preceptor of apology? or of that Chief Shepherd whose personal teaching is the grand exemplar of teaching in the great office of pastoral care?

The care may in this respect be taken with full effectiveness without any disputatious harping on one string, of apologetical polemics. David, in his open air of the Judean hills, was not even in his own mind carrying on a debate with “science falsely so called” (1 Tim. vi. 20), when he sang a song of the external evidence, about the heavens declaring the glory of God, and the firmament showing His handiwork. And in the Christian assembly the people may be led to see the evidential indications of a new heaven and a

<sup>1</sup> It is said that in last century an eminent English Evangelical Non-conformist drove his congregation into Socinianism by monotonously incessant labour in proving the Godhead of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 79.



new earth, in the "signs" which are a pointed "manifestation" of the supernatural "glory" (John ii. 11) of new creation, without—*e.g.*—being dragged through metaphysical refutations of a worldliness, in the form of naturalistic "philosophy" of atheism (Col. ii. 8), whose "vain deceits" are "spoilers," like the false lights of a wrecker's lure. Every child in the congregation may, without precociousness of a debating evil nature, be led to see and feel the evidential significance of the wonderfulness in *Exodus* and the *Kings*, in the *Gospels* and in *Acts*. The youngest can hardly be *prevented* from seeing, in the healing of the paralytic (Matt. ix. 1-8), proof that Jesus is the Son of God, and perceiving that the healing is a "sign" of our salvation from sin.<sup>1</sup> And not to see this in it is to be *blind* (John ix. 39) to the whole wondrous history, where the Son of Man is set forth turning water into wine, feeding thousands with a few loaves, giving sight to the born blind, raising the dead, rising from the grave, ascending into heaven.

But supposing that there is this amount or kind of furniture or equipment (2 Tim. iii. 17), which can hardly fail to be in any formed Christian mind,—the prescription is, further, with reference to "every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in" Christians, to be "always *ready for apology*" ("answer") to the inquirer. Here the "for"—Greek *pros*—perhaps has a shade of meaning, not simply intellectual preparedness for answering, but moral *impulsion* or *leaning* toward it. The suggestion thus is, of a *cordial* readiness, *alacrity* (cp. *promptus ad certamen*), as if on the part of a "good soldier," on the edge of battle, in act of readiness for the onset, eager for the trumpet signalling "Charge!" (so Paul at Acts xvii. 16, xxvi. 2). The "always," in the habitual temper of mind thus flashing out, is (with allowance) illustrated by the martial clan motto, "Ready: aye ready"—where the *semper paratus* has the specific meaning of preparedness for battle or combat. It is illustrated by contrast

<sup>1</sup> Not long ago, the present writer heard this exposition from an infant class in the lobby of a church. *What more* can be comprehended of that narrative which a babe can so apprehend,—by the theologian in the pulpit? yea, by the angels (1 Pet. i. 12)?

of *dumb-stricken* believers (? see Rom. x. 10), when there was trumpet call of occasion for giving a reason of the hope that is in *them* (?). Not only reason is to be given—perhaps constrainedly, under compulsion, like a shameful confession extorted by the rack. It is to be given “cheerfully” (2 Cor. ix. 7) as (Rom. xii. 8)—toward an inquirer—the gift of one who truly “showeth mercy.”

The terms of the prescription, illustrated by the immediate context, and by the aspect of the Epistle as a whole, call attention to *the situation* which presumably the apostle here has in his view. The passage 1 Pet. iii. 13–16 is, when closely considered, seen to be substantially a reproduction of Christ’s utterances regarding confession rising into apology (Luke xii. 5–12, xxi. 13, etc.), which (John xiv. 26) Peter no doubt has as it were in the structure or texture of his apostolic mind;—whence perhaps it comes that now in reproducing them he appears completely unconscious of reproduction, expressing himself<sup>1</sup> as a man simply speaking out his own thoughts in his own words. In particular, both here and elsewhere in the Epistle (*e.g.* iv. 12–19), there are expressions which remind us of the words of the Lord regarding darkly stormy times of persecution as in the future of His Church for trial of her faithfulness in witnessing for Him. And some have thought that the description at 1 Pet. iv. 12–19, of a “fiery trial” even unto death,<sup>2</sup> is a miraculous prediction of the *Bithynian* persecution (*cp.* 1 Pet. i. 1) sixty years after. The question whether it really is so is not in the straight line of our present inquiry; but a side-note on it may conduce toward realising *the situation* at present in our view.

SIDE-NOTE *on the question as to* 1 Pet. iv. 12–19,—whether it is a specific prediction of the Bithynian persecution, A.D. 110? That it is not, may be held on such grounds as the following:—(1) Though (1 Pet. i. 1) Bithynians are among the Christians

<sup>1</sup> The true originality. It appears all through this Epistle, which essentially is a duplicate of *Ephesians*, while yet every syllable of it is truly Peter’s own. Another sample of Petrine reproduction is seen at 2 Pet. i. 12–15—where note the references to “tabernacle”; *cp.* vers. 16–18.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek for “souls” at ver. 19 means also “lives”—*cp.* Luke xxiii. 46; Acts vii. 59, and the expression of Sir Simon de Montfort, knowing the battle was lost before it was begun, “Let us give our souls to God, for our bodies are Prince Edward’s.”

here addressed, the Epistle does not appear to have any specialty of reference to them as distinguished from other Anatolian Christians addressed in it. (2) The kind of "fiery trial" that is spoken of at 1 Pet. iv. 12 is not anything peculiar to the Bithynian experience of persecution two generations after: on the contrary (ver. 12, cp. i. 7), it is expressly said to be familiar in the experience of Christians generally at and before this time of writing. (3) The *representation* of the trial is *general*: it has no "particular marks" identifying the Bithynian persecution as being what is here in view; *e.g.* the description might equally well apply to *other* persecutions, which now are not particularly known about because there was no (*sacer vates*?) Pliny to record particulars regarding them in a letter to his emperor. (4) *N.B.* especially, that the passage has no *look* of miraculous prediction,—is not "in the prophetic manner." It does not *foretell* a storm that is in the future, to break out where now there is clear sky; but describes a stormful *present*,—such as we otherwise know to have existed,—clouds darkly mustering overhead and all around, perhaps already emitting occasional premonitory hoarse thunders and fierce lightnings,—say (A.D. 63) a year before the awful storm-burst of the first "great" persecution, under Nero at Rome, where Paul is now "an ambassador in bonds." And *N.B.* in particular, that Peter here, with reference to a storm that may be impending, *reasons* from the present state of things to future possibilities as folded in the existing actualities. Now an oracle does not reason. Both as fisherman and as shepherd, the apostle is habitually a "discerner of the signs of the times." And the kind of weather-prophecy that proceeds by *reasoning*, though it should be divinely inspired, is not oracular prediction; while *the reasoning* here has no exclusiveness of applicability to the case of Bithynia as distinguished from other cases.

As to the situation, it suffices to know that in the prescription of apology the reference is to a *trying* or testing time, in which the testing process is *searchingly painful* as fire (1 Pet. iv. 12), and (1 Pet. i. 7) what was tested was particularly Christian *faith*. That in Peter's own day might be in the form of violence of persecution, even unto death: witness apostolic history, corroborated by heathen historians.<sup>1</sup> But (Phil. iii. 18, 19, cp. ii. 15–17) there might be trials more painful for Christians to undergo or to contemplate arising out of unfaithfulness of brethren, tempting others to

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus and Suetonius—see further on.

hold back in cowardly or shame-stricken silence when there was call to come forward and speak out, if not even, tempting to lapse into scepticism or disbelief: as "when iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Against such "grievous wolves" as false teachers thus become tempters, 2 *Peter* was especially intended for warning: perhaps, immediately after the publication of 1 *Peter* in Asia Minor, on receipt of intelligence from "faithful" Silas (1 Pet. v. 12), who had carried the first letter west from Babylon. Some little time before this (Acts xx. 28-30), Paul had very solemnly warned Asia Minor against such "grievous wolves" in his last farewell address to the Ephesian elders (cp. 1 Pet. v. 1-4). *Ephesians*, written from his Roman prison, is, we note (with its duplicate *Colossians*), essentially the same Epistle as 1 *Peter*;—in contents, in structural movement, and in some testing details, in respect of which—constitution *a view of Christianity as a whole*—the two are essentially different from every other book in the Bible. But the three Pastoral Epistles—of later date than *Ephesians*—are addressed to organising superintendents of the nascent Christianity of Paul's East. It is *in them* that we see the Pauline analogue of 2 *Peter*. And they, *e.g.*, complete our view of the fact (2 Pet. i. 16—where the Greek for "fable" is *myth*) that at this time a tendency to *mythic*ism, explaining away the historical reality of Bible facts and the plain true nature of Bible doctrine, constituted one of the internal "perils" of those eastern churches from "false brethren."

Relatively to apology at such a time, we may picture to ourselves a case of a confessor, perhaps in prison waiting for martyrdom (see 2 Tim. iv. 6-8), who (John iii. 1, 2) is visited there, it may be in secret or by stealth, by a heathen somehow moved to earnest inquiry as to the reason of the Christian hope so wonderful. Or, we may think of a professing Christian whom false teaching, or lapsing or apostasy of others, has shaken in his belief as to the foundations. But in substance the situation, as giving occasion for such injunction regarding apology as this, may present itself anywhere in Christendom, this day. For the situation in substance is constituted by circumstances which can have place in the ordinary experience of Christians in any age or country.



The thus *abiding* situation is summed up in the following particulars:—1. *The question* as to the truth of this religion *is open* for consideration on grounds of reason, by the common judgment of mankind.—2. In possession of Christians *there is producible reason* by which that judgment ought to be satisfied.—3. For production of those reasons, according to opportunity or call, *the community of Christians*, the commonalty of professed believers, are, jointly and severally, placed under apostolic prescription of apology.

As the reproduction of *Ephesians* in 1 *Peter* as a whole is essentially Petrine, so is the reproduction at 1 Pet. iii. 13–16 of the Saviour's utterances regarding confession rising into apology. The essential unity of the passage with those utterances is represented by the following particulars of coincidence:—1. *The situation* of the confessor, opposed by threatening world "power";—2. his *safety*, under guardian care of God;—3. his obligation to maintain a strangely *calm composedness*, as of a Pharos light in stormy darkness;—4. (as the secret of this) his assurance of *God's being*, not only for him in Heaven and with him here in Providence, but *in him*, as a grace to help him in such time of need (cp. Christ in the storm-tossed little ship on the narrow, gusty Galilean sea).<sup>1</sup>

Points of contrast illustrating the essentially Petrine character of the reproduction are, *e.g.*, the following:—1. Where Christ had a *terrific severity* of warning against unfaithfulness, Peter has only a gentle *winning suaveness*; and,—2. where Christ said, "*The Holy Ghost shall teach you*," etc., what Peter says is (cp. John xvi. 14), "*Sanctify in your hearts Christ the Lord*" (R.V. in accordance with the best MS. authority).

Such details we only glance at in passing, as they are not full in the line of our present inquiry. But we will dwell for a little on what here comes into view with reference to certain matters more directly concerning us.

1. *The inward spiritual frame of mind*, in which the duty of apologising is to be gone about.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental preparedness is, having Christ in the heart as Lord: thus,

<sup>1</sup> The present writer was told by the best oarsman on Loch Carron, that they had no fear of storm approaching visibly upon the sea: that the formidable onfall is in its leaping down the steep, so as to be on them unawares. But there is One whom even then "the winds and sea obey"—as perhaps Jonah will find.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 33, 79.

nearer than He was to Peter and others in the night-storm at sea when they were sinking, or than at Babylon (Dan. iii. 25) He was to His three witnesses in the furnace;—in the heart adoring Him, as in a temple-fortress which He fills and guards when worshipped there. The self-possession of the soul (Luke xxi. 19)—on such occasions for “endurance”—thus is a possession of the heart by Christ; and this (cp. 1 Pet. iv. 19), in a deliberate purposing self-consecration and committal unto His kingliness, as the natural world’s life is committed (*offered* in the morning songs of birds?) unto the sun which rules the day. This appears on the shining face of Stephen (Acts vii. 59—R.V.), “calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” And the protapologist (1 Pet. iv. 19) now generalises that swan-song of the proto-martyr by saying, “Commit your lives unto God as unto a faithful Creator.”<sup>1</sup> The preparedness thus brought into view (cp. Ps. xci. 1, etc.) is far above that implied in “Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just.”

2. *The encouraging clause*, lit. “fear not their fearfulness, neither be panic-stricken” (“fear not their fear, neither be troubled”—R.V.), may remind us of what occurred in Dothan, when the prophet’s servant, at the grey dawn, perceiving that this refuge was now begirt with hostile heathen armed pursuers, was reassured by being shown, between him and that force, the encircling force of Jehovah’s chariots and horsemen. Peter, remembering how in Geth-semane his own flesh was weak though his spirit was willing, has the power (Heb. ii. 18) of sympathetic intelligence to prescribe thus for the situation here in view (Luke xxii. 32). On the other hand (Heb. v. 1, 2), those who are like-minded with him, as he is with Christ, will be “ready to apologise,” with cordial alacrity, as “having compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.”

3. *The precautionary clause* is more fully to our present purpose. The true reading of it is<sup>2</sup> “but”—or “yet”—

<sup>1</sup> See “sidenote” above, p. 114–15. At Acts vii. 59 *the God* in A.V. and *the Lord* in R.V. alike are wanting in the original: *the person* there “called upon” is thus conjectural. The Greek at 1 Pet. iv. 19—*psychē*, which may mean “soul,” is that in Christ’s “He that will save his *life*,” etc.

<sup>2</sup> Greek, *ἀλλὰ*.

“with meekness and fear.” Peter, with a sensitive while powerful nature, knows what it is to be liable to fever-chill in reaction from fever-heat. He had to be trained by pruning (John xv. 2) out of an over-boldness, in the carnality of a self-confident rashness. He thus got a lesson when he endeavoured to walk on the sea. But his costly education was worth much (1 Pet. i. 7). His personal experiences of the weakness of man’s flesh (vers. 24, 25) were overruled to the effect of his being<sup>1</sup> peculiarly the Strengtheners of the brethren—“the shepherd apostle” distinctively, as Paul was distinctively the “soldier” apostle. And (cp. 1 Tim. vi. 12) from Peter, whose own past life furnishes a most memorably impressive case to point his present teaching, there comes with peculiar force, of a peculiarly good grace, this precautionary clause, on which we now will dwell in conclusion.

*The carnal belligerency*, of mere combativeness, or of a boldness that is not tempered by “meekness,” is illustrated by Peter’s own sword-stroke in the garden. And his “with fear” in this clause, verbally at variance with his Master’s “fear not” at Luke xii. 5, as well as with his own opening of the present sentence, can be charitably construed as referring to that “reverence” (see Phil. ii. 12; Heb. xii. 9) which we owe to every lawful superior—even though (1 Pet. ii. 13, 17) he should personally be such an one as “the whole world’s” master Nero, or (ver. 18) officially such an one as Malchus served. What Richard Baxter censured in “dogmatical word-warriors” was not the genuine boldness of a “good soldier” in defence of truth, but a partisan combativeness<sup>2</sup> like that of a Friar Tuck,—which, where disgrace is ruin, disgraces what it professes to defend.

It is true that to represent the conventional apologetics as “evangelical bullying” might be only (worse than Diogenes “trampling on Plato’s pride”) a cynical depreciation of earnest honest men’s performance of plain Christian duty. But Peter in this warning—as against cutting off Malchus’ ear in the interest of a faith which “cometh by hearing”—has nothing of the base (perhaps unconscious) insincerity, that panders to worldliness of hatred of the gospel by a seeming

<sup>1</sup> See footnote above, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 4, etc.

sincerity in dispraise of a really Christian witness-bearing for it. And (Acts xxiii. 2-5) a generous Christian spirit may be tempted into carnal belligerency in the witness-bearing—*e.g.* by foul injustice or falsehood in the opposition to it, whether of a Nero employing Captain Sword, or of a Demos led astray by Captain Pen or Captain Tongue.

Even the just indignation of a ruggedly great, beautiful, fiery-souled Tertullian may have in it an earthliness of that wrath of man which worketh not the righteousness of God. And the modern apologist, though he should be sincerely earnest in predilection for sound reason as Peter was in his human affection toward the sinless Son of Man, yet has to be on his guard against earthliness of partisanship even for truth, that would be a corrupting alloy in that (*orgé*) moral resentment which, according to Plato, is the distinctively Godlike thing in manhood (see Eph. iv. 23-27).

The spirit of the Teacher who (Matt. xi. 29) invites weary man to soul's rest in the instruction of a meek and lowly heart of (ver. 27) God Incarnate, is finely exemplified in Paul (see 1 Cor. xi. 1). His vehement earnestness in apologising was such that Festus thought he was gone mad. But (2 Cor. v. 10-20; *N.B.* ver. 13) this was only one aspect of a soul-filling intensity of longing for men's true life, and God's honour in that life new and true: witness the impression which his manner of labouring for "his gospel" often made on worldly men,—men perhaps like the sceptical Shaftesbury (*Characteristics*), with cool derisiveness criticising "the heroic passion for saving souls" (which Gadarenes, though they be not "scientists," know to be a visionary thing). Paul's passion for men's deliverance from evil drew Agrippa to the threshold of true life eternal in the gospel. Yet perhaps no one ever imagined that his polemical ardour, in warring for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, had in it any base alloy of Paul,—or inhumanity of disregard of the rights or the feelings of those against whom he earnestly contended for the faith. In his polemic there always was the "meekness and fear" of due respectful affection toward all men (1 Pet. ii. 17, cp. iii. 9) in combination with zeal for truth, conscience toward God, and profound habitual apprehension of the terribleness of His holiness, before whose judg-



ment throne we all must appear, to receive the things done in the body. The spirit even of his warfare against men's errors was fitted to win them, not repel them; and it is the spirit inculcated in the apostolic prescription, as well as thus exemplified in the apostolic practice of apology.

Faithfulness to the trust thus reposed in the community of believers, their frankly speaking out in such appeal to the *reason* of their neighbours (John i. 41) on behalf of that religion (Num. x. 9) whose goodness is to themselves a matter of personal experience,—is fitted powerfully to promote the success of Christianity in localities and circles, as a leaven that leaveneth the lump. And *the confidence in this religion*, that is evinced by such a trust on the part of its founders—their implication of *magna est veritas et prevalebit*—is further presumptive evidence of its truth and divinity. Only, in a zealous boldness which is admirable, let Mr. Valiant-for-the-Truth remember, not to cut off Malchus' ear—a blunder like that of the not wisely zealous woodman who cuts down the branch he stands on.

## BOOK II.

### APOLOGETICS IN ITS TWO POST-APOSTOLIC PERIODS.

IN exploring the course of a great river, the traveller may begin where it enters the sea, thence to make his way observant up through the lands, to its headwaters among the solitary snow-clad mountain peaks. There are advantages of such a method in historical study of apologetics. But in the New Testament apologetics we have already made a study of the great river at its sources. And now, in our prosecution of inquiry through post-apostolic ages, we find that the balance of advantages for us may be in favour of beginning with what lies nearest to the primeval period that has already been considered by us.

The primitive epoch of post-apostolic Christian history has

as an outstanding characteristic feature a "period of apologetics," in considerable measure coincident with the "age of persecutions" at the hand of the heathen Roman empire. To that *primitive* "period of apologetics" we will devote the first of the two chapters of this Book II. The second of the two chapters will be given to what we will designate the *modern period of apologetics*,—say, from the sixteenth century down to our day. The Middle Ages, which in other respects were an epoch of transition from the ancient civilisation to the modern, were theologically, as represented by the "scholastic" period at their culmination, dogmatic in comparison with both the primitive and the modern epochs in the history of Christian thought.

With reference to comparison of the two apologetic periods, respectively primitive and modern, it may be said generally, that *the substantive revelation*, of the living God and Saviour in Christ, is what all but exclusively occupied the primitive apologetics, while in the modern apologetics a great place has come to be occupied by *the scriptural record* of the alleged revelation. The general statement would require to be somewhat qualified or explained in anything like a full view of historical apologetics. But rigour of detailed exactness here is not requisite for the purpose of our present inquiry.

#### CHAP. I. PRIMITIVE PERIOD OF APOLOGETICS.

Here an initial consideration of the relative condition of that heathen world, to which the primitive apology was addressed, may, through defining *the situation* out of which the Christian apologetics first arose, facilitate our inquiry as to the nature and true spirit of the apologetics, and at the same time may serve an indirectly apologetic purpose, through keeping in view, what is too easily forgotten where the gospel sun is shining,—the *natural* condition, both intellectual and moral, relatively to God and to spiritual things generally, of mankind where not visited by that healing light (Acts xvii. 15, etc., xxvi. 18; 1 John v. 19). Such as fallen mankind are where the gospel finds them, they cannot fail to become again if the gladsome light should

leave them,—though the overt manifestation of their spiritual abandonment may differ in aspect from that which confronted the primitive Christians (Rom. i. 18–32; Eph. iv. 18, 19; cp. Isa. i. 3–6), in that heathen world where men greedily gave themselves over to uncleanness, or, *God* gave them over to uncleanness of heart, vileness of affections, a reprobate mind. And the exercise of recalling to mind that old world's condition as it lay in the wicked one will further serve our special purpose of inquiry, by bringing to our mind's view the *vital continuity* of all the post-apostolic ages with the primeval period of the apostles and of Christ.

SEC. 1. *The Situation out of which the Church Apologetics first arose.*

Very recently there was discovered the long-lost Apology of Aristides, which, along with that of Quadratus—of which a few fragments are preserved—is understood to have been presented to the Emperor Adrian at Athens, *circa* A.D. 130. The Apologies of these two “philosophers” are the most ancient of which Christian history makes mention. Until the recent discovery there was no known extant “Apology” (in full) of earlier date than Justin Martyr's two, *circa* A.D. 150, at Rome, addressed respectively to the Emperor and to the Senate; though the discussion represented by his larger work, *Dialogue with Jew Trypho*, is understood to have taken place (at Ephesus?) perhaps as early as A.D. 140. From his time down to the close of the primitive age of persecutions (A.D. 312), Apologies now extant were comparatively numerous; and during at least two generations beginning with him apology may be said to have been almost the whole of the Church's work of literary publication, so that—on the principle *denominatio fit a majori*—the period is rightly named “the period of apologetics.”

The history of “the persecutions,” on the part of the heathen world-empire, reaches back into the middle-apostolic age in the primeval century. It began with a certain mysterious abruptness, A.D. 64, in the outbreaking of Neronian persecution at Rome, at or near the close of Paul's first two years (Acts xxviii. 30) of imprisonment there. This was the first express recognition by that empire

of the existence of Christianity as a distinct religion. And on the part of heathen imperialism it was the opening of a war—as of hammer against anvil—that was destined to endure for centuries, until the hammer was shattered into non-existence, and the anvil became a visible Christendom or world-empire of Christ (Rev. xi. 15; cp. Dan. ii. 31–35).

The “great” persecutions might be regarded as in that long age of warfare the pitched battles or campaigns: but even in times of comparative truce or pause, when “the churches had rest,” there must have been innumerable detailed local or individual sufferings and privations, corresponding to the skirmishes and raids and minor harassments of war-time.

*The Neronian persecution*—not recognisably referred to in Scripture—is described by the greatest Roman historian,<sup>1</sup> who lived at the site of it, and wrote within about half a century of its date,—which is fixed by its connection with the great fire (A.D. 64), supposed to have destroyed three-fourths of the imperial city. The blame of that public calamity was laid by Nero on “the Christians”; for the purpose, it was and is understood, of turning away from himself the suspicion (probably well founded) of having been the real incendiary. What they really suffered for was the name of Christ. Tacitus, unworthily echoing popular “calumnies,”—which at this very time are being effectually refuted by his friend Pliny in Bithynia,<sup>2</sup>—says that the Christians were detested for their crimes, and explains that they were actuated by a principle of hatred to mankind. But he bears unchallengeable witness to the fact, of a strange invincible constancy of theirs in suffering for that name,—though so absurdly mistaken in attempting to account for the constancy, which by heathen writers henceforward will be described as “obstinacy.”<sup>3</sup>

In the inquisition which thus, originating in the charge

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* xv. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Letter to Trajan.*

<sup>3</sup> The “obstinacy,” which Pliny will also call “contumacy,” was on the part of Christians a distinct and very grave offence against the civil law. That is, their refusal to refrain from openly professing Christianity was a defiance of the empire, which prohibited this religion. Of course the Christians *had* to be thus “obstinate”—or false.



about burning the city, came to be a search for Christians guilty of a prohibited religion, there were found (he says) "a huge multitude" (*multitudo ingens*) of them (cp. Rom. i. 8, and the catalogue of names in Rom. xvi.—written some five years before this inquisition). Simply on account of professed Christianity<sup>1</sup> they were put to death, with horrible and frightful tortures in its infamy; and in such numbers that, *e.g.*, the Crown Gardens were illuminated through the night with the fires of their martyrdom,—the citizens being invited by their emperor to be spectators of the "sport"!<sup>2</sup> Another "sport" which then began to be practised was (cp. Dan. vi.), throwing Christians alive to wild beasts, the humanity of the martyrs being—on that first occasion—disguised with a covering of the skins of animals of the chase, to encourage and incite the natural enemies of such animals to rend and destroy (cp. the "calumnies" against the moral character of these—and other—faithful witnesses for Christ).<sup>3</sup> Crucifixion, a third mode of martyrdom exemplified on that occasion, is, while (see Heb. xii. 2; Gal. iii. 13) it was most infamous as a punishment, deemed the torture that has in it the largest amount of sheer physical suffering that creatures can inflict on a human being (see Matt. x. 38; cp. Luke xii. 5). But perhaps the most vivid illustration, furnished by that first "great" persecution, of the revoltingness of inhumanity of which fallen mankind is capable, was in a detail that is noted by the historian with reference to that most awful illumination of the Crown Gardens:—In order to make good torch-lights for the illumination, the garments of the martyrs had been previously soaked with oil or other such inflammable materials!

It is not impossible that<sup>4</sup> Paul at this time (cp. Acts xxviii. 30) should have been absent from Rome: on the fairly credible supposition (see Phil. ii. 24; 1 Tim. iii. 14) that his martyrdom (see 2 Tim. iv. 6–8), perhaps as late as A.D. 67, was at the close of a *second* Roman imprisonment,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ludibria*—Tacit.; cp. Heb. xii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Christianos ad leones!*—"Christians to the lions!"—thus came to be a popular cry, like the clamouring for gladiatorial games—that had in it a soul of the original "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 10–12.

and that his first Roman imprisonment (Phil. i. 7, 17) was closed by his being, on trial, set at liberty, as found innocent in the matter of the charges that had occasioned his being, on his own appeal (Acts xxv. 9-12, xxvi. 32), sent a prisoner to Rome;—after which he must have written the three Pastoral Epistles, and may (Rom. xv. 24, 28) have been enabled to gratify his cherished aspiration to go with the gospel to Spain, where a tradition makes him to have been finally apprehended as a professing Christian. And it is not perfectly certain that the prison from which he sent Phil. ii. 15-17 was not in Cæsarea, though most probably it was in Rome.<sup>1</sup> But in any case *Philippians* was written at a time when the writer's heart, if not his body, was in the imperial city,—not many months, perhaps only a few weeks or days, before that Neronian Garden illumination; and in the recollection of this, we see in that illumination a gloriously though frightfully vivid and powerful illustration of the apostle's words at Phil. ii. 15-17.

There he (ver. 17) speaks of himself as "ready to be" "joyfully" "offered (poured out as an oblation) on the sacrifice and service of" his brethren's "faith." A sacrificial oblation was a customary offering of ancient peoples at the beginning of a war. David (2 Sam. xxiii.) would not drink the water of the well of Bethlehem, procured at the peril of three devoted lives of hero servants, but "poured it out before the Lord." And Paul (Acts xxi. 13), now as heretofore, is willing that his great heroic life should so be an oblation in its closing. But is he aware of the fact, that there thus will be on his part a grandly appropriate opening of the war of centuries, in which (cp. 1 John v. 4) the persecuted faith is to overcome the world by suffering "for the name of the Lord Jesus"? It were vain for us to inquire, whether his great heart, made sore (Phil. iii. 18, 19) by prison thoughts of what baseness can show itself among professing Christians even in such times of "fiery trial," obtained strength and healing in some "heavenly vision" of that so near future, lighted up, in the moral darkness of a lost world, at that world's very centre, by "a huge multitude" of Roman Christians, "giving their bodies to be burned," with so start-

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 10-13.

lingly strange a vividness illustrating his description of the destination of a true life (Phil. ii. 15, 16),—"That ye might be blameless and harmless, children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, *among whom ye are seen as lights* in the world, holding forth the word of life" (R.V.). Was ever previous description so realised as this was, A.D. 64, in the Crown Garden "sport"?

The illumination, so terrific in its aspects to the eye of flesh, may have presented aspects of peculiar hopefulness to one who, like Paul in his prison-thoughts at this time (Eph. vi. 10-20), perceived the true inward nature of the warfare that was thus inaugurated on the world's part.<sup>1</sup> "Courage! brother," said a Protestant worthy to a fellow-martyr at the stake, "we shall this day kindle a fire in England." That Neronian outrage on humanity was, says the historian, felt as such even by Roman heathens at the time. And a deeper feeling—which eluded his observation—may have thrilled through "the whole world" (Luke ii. 1), as the red light of that "fiery trial" shone out from the world-imperial centre so as to be "known and read of all men." This and that man, reflecting on the thing, so monstrously unprecedented in human experience, might be led, though dimly, to anticipate the reasoning of the last apostle (1 John v. 4), that that which so has overcome the world must surely be "born of God." In any case here, visible from afar, conspicuous at the heart of the last heathen world-empire, a banner is raised, *a witnessing fire inextinguishable is kindled*, like a morning star of hope for fallen and lost humanity. Through heathen darkness of "the whole world" there shines out, in the feebleness of a suffering manhood of believers, the visible beginning of the new eternal empire of the Son of Man from the Ancient of Days (Dan. vii. 13).

The observation of Tacitus regarding a feeling among the people, of its being sad that suffering so dire should be undergone by human beings for the cruel pleasure of one man,

<sup>1</sup> In *Norna Doone*, John Ridd, the strongest man in England, in old age, looking back to a visit he paid to London in his early days, remembers the tears that he found on his face when he got disentangled from the crowd that had been looking on the execution of Lord Russell. The Revolution of 1688 was in that movement of an English heart.

may on consideration appear inane or jejune, as coming from such a man on such an occasion,—as the occasion, in its moral wonderfulness, might have been apprehended by any commonly intelligent heathen. What a contrast, *e.g.*, his observation exhibits to the sublimity of a passing note of Luke (Luke xxiii. 48) on one gesture of the Jerusalem Jews taking their last look at the cross on Calvary! They, too, had witnessed a “sport,” in the mockings and buffetings at the trials of Jesus, and in the tauntings and revilings that embittered His long death-agony (see Ps. lxix. 20). But the centurion saw his innocence (Luke xxiii. 47), through which (Matt. xxvii. 54, cp. ver. 19) might be perceived His divinity. The world’s face was darkened. The earth rent. Just men came alive out of their graves. And the Jerusalem Jews—they all, “beholding the things which were done, *smote their breasts*, and returned.”

If the Roman commonalty saw only the sad misrule of that Neronian cruelty, reflection on it may have served to prepare them for the murdering of their man-god<sup>1</sup> not many months after; they were as blind men to the true significance—even the pity and the tragic terror—of that so appalling massacre of innocents before their eyes. What the hard and shallow heathen heart thus failed to apprehend, even (John iii. 13) of the so manifested condition of “the world” as there visibly “lying in the wicked one” (so R.V., 1 John v. 19), might in some measure be divined by Jews, of whom there were many in that confluence of all the world’s populations (cp. Acts xxviii. 24–30). After *they* “smote their breasts”—what we next see of them, in six weeks’ time, is (see Zech. xii. 10) the conversion of, first three thousand, and then five thousand, to the religion of that cross they had been looking on (Gal. vi. 14). As for the Roman Christians, had they not read, in the newly published *Epistle to the Philippian Saints*, the words of their prince-apostle of the Gentiles, about a glorious true destination of life, which may find its brightest realisation in such “offering” as that of the Neronian Crown

<sup>1</sup> The emperor, supreme pontiff of their religion, was, in the celebrated words of Gibbon, all at once “a priest, an atheist, and a god.” Such was Gibbon’s idolised “philosopher,” Emperor Marcus Aurelius—a worse persecutor than Nero.



Garden illumination—"in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, *among whom they are seen as lights*"? Here, surely, in "a good confession," is a good foundation for the Church apologetics.

*The Bithynian persecution*,<sup>1</sup> A.D. 110, is described by Pliny, the friend of Tacitus, in a letter to their common friend, the "good" Emperor Trajan, which is an official report of Pliny as proconsul regarding what then was passing under his personal administration of the Bithynian government. This was only ten years after the supposed time of the death of the Apostle John, who long had flourished in the neighbourhood,—particularly in Asia, so closely associated with Bithynia in the Petro-Pauline period (Acts xvi. 6, 7; 1 Pet. i. 1). Excepting what may be inferred from the apocalyptic letters to the seven Asian churches (Rev. ii.—iii.), the period following the Petro-Pauline, the last third part of the century is, we saw, in the New Testament history a blank,—like the bridge-way in Mirza's vision, which is shrouded from view in mist excepting at the two extremities, where there is light.

At the extremities of the Johannine period of primeval Christianity there is a New Testament light of history,—at the one extreme from the Scriptures of the Petro-Pauline period, and at the other from John's own writings toward the close of the century; while for more external illustration, of environment of Christianity in the heathen world,—if the "great" Roman persecution be as a luminous flame-pillar of testimony a little before the beginning of the Johannine period, another such light-pillar of illustration is constituted, a little after the close of that period, by the "great" persecution in Bithynia. It is remarkable that we should have authentic accounts of these two most memorably illustrative occurrences, not from Christians under influence of apostles and their movements, but from heathens who, profoundly antagonistic to this religion, yet are men of highest character as trustworthy witnesses regarding fact within their knowledge, while regarding the facts they here speak of they have the best possible means of information, whether from personal observation and research or from free use of the relative official records of the empire.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 114, 115.

It is a providential provision relatively to the subject of the present inquiry.

In the light of the persecution of A.D. 64, we saw a decisive commencement of the mortal antagonism of heathen world-empire to the then infant new kingdom of God among men. What we now see in the light of the persecution of A.D. 110 is, that same antagonism, fifty years later, when the new kingdom is manifested as in a heroic prime of youth (cp. 1 John ii. 14)—a kingdom which cannot be suppressed. Formerly, the magistracy appear as if *surprised* by incidental discovery of a new religion sprung up suddenly among the people; here, on the other hand, its existence is visibly of old standing. Some say that they have discontinued the profession of it as many as twenty years ago. It has had time to take such possession of the whole Bithynian land, both town and country, that the heathen religion is all but virtually abolished in practice, and Pliny seems alarmed by the necessity laid on him, of stamping out this new religion, as if to his apprehension that would be something like a depopulation of his province. And so deeply is the faith rooted in men's minds and hearts, that, so far as appears from his report, not one of those professing it at the time—male or female, young or old, bond or free—has been found willing to "accept deliverance" (cp. Heb. xi. 35) from tortures and infamous death at the cost of denying Christ. Here, too, is "a good confession," laying a good foundation for Church apologetics.

To us the Bithynian Christianity has a special interest on account of what we know of its previous history. The region is (Acts xvi. 6, 7) one of two that, in Paul's evangelistic labour, were literally and strangely "passed by," as if under a mysterious *doom* of preterition; and yet which (1 Pet. i. 1, v. 1), a few years after—say, ten or twelve—were among those five Anatolian regions which were addressed by Peter from Babylon as now evangelised, with congregations constituted under presbyterial government (cp. Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5–9). The persecution was fifty years after this; and in the intervening period we obtain a side-glance at the condition of Christianity in one of those two regions from the apocalyptic letters to its seven churches (Rev. i.–iii.), if not also from prison Epistles of Paul (Eph., 1 and 2 Tim.). And

we know otherwise that for generations after, Asia Minor, so signally favoured with apostolic planting and watering, continued to be a head-centre of spiritual influences, evil as well as good, in the Christian world.

A special contribution to apologetics resulted from the Bithynian persecutions through the light which it cast on the moral and spiritual character of the Christians of that very early post-apostolic time. It may be understood from the tenor of Pliny's letter, that the "calumnies," which were so cruel an aggravation of their other sufferings, were already in possession of the heathen mind:—charging them with "atheism," with eating infants' flesh, with perpetration of abominable works of darkness. These were effectively refuted by the letter, in its official report of what had been judicially ascertained in the trials of the Christians,—that they worshipped Christ as God (or, as "a god"—the Latin, *quasi deo*, will admit either rendering), that their congregational evening meal was *innocent*, and that if they met before morning light, it was—not for love of darkness—but in order to avoid an avoidable disregard of a law that had been proclaimed by imperial authority for the province. Further, in their congregational worship there was, along with that worship of Christ already referred to, a "sacrament" (a Latin word meaning the military *oath of loyalty*) of covenanting, to be conscientiously careful in matters of common duty of man toward man.

There thus was put on judicial record of the empire a disproof of the "calumnies"; and this may have been serviceable to the Christians with impartial magistrates and others who chose to inquire into the matter. But for generations after this the calumnies continued to be in circulation, and to be believed by the generality without inquiry;—for instance, about this very time, by Pliny's own friend, the great historian Tacitus, unworthily echoing baseless rumour of the commonalty. Still, the fact thus once made clear, in the red light of that Bithynian persecution, that the Christians were stainless in moral character, while profoundly earnest in religion, was an established point of Christian apologetics,—an historical foundation of producible "experimental evidence" of this religion. From the Acts, the Epistles, and the

Apocalypse,—to go no further,—we know that the primeval Christians were in their own estimation far from stainless before the holy God they served. But before men, and as compared with the world around them “lying in wickedness,” their ordinary life, which the persecutions brought vividly into view, was an evidencing fruit of new moral creation: they were thus “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shone as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life” (Phil. ii. 15, 16).

Looking thus as into the storm-rocked cradle of apologetics, we perceive as to *the situation*, that those early Christians were well placed for knowing about the facts of our New Testament history. For instance, they could hardly fail to know who really wrote 1 *Peter*—the supposed genuineness of which destroys the foundation of Tübingen theorising<sup>1</sup> about forgery of New Testament Scriptures. Their neighbour, Polycarp of Smyrna, some two years before this time—*i.e. circa* A.D. 108—in a letter to the Philippian Christians now in our hands, without naming either Peter or this Epistle, shows that he is full of it, as if 1 Pet. i.—iv. had come to form the very warp and woof of all his thinking about religion. And it is only ten years since they were within easy reach of Polycarp’s old master, the Apostle John, who had been Peter’s own heart’s brother from the early Galilean days, and was a very Boanerges for the pure “word of God.” Some still alive among them were no doubt personally acquainted with Mark and Silas (1 Pet. v. 12, 13, i. 1) at the time when the Epistle claims to have been written and sent to their churches by Peter. Where, when, how could a *forged* 1 *Peter* be imposed on so much as one Bithynian congregation, or even one ruling elder in a country parish there, to say nothing of all Bithynia, all “Asia,” all Asia Minor, the whole Christian world from that day to this? Further,—

<sup>1</sup> Namely, by showing that the Tübingen supposition, of a doctrinal antagonism of Paul’s “gospel” to the original apostolic teaching, is the opposite of fact (Gal. ii.; Acts xv.). In that Epistle, Peter, the primate of the original apostles, appears, relatively to the doctrines in question, not opposed to Paulinism, but—as is confessed—“more Pauline than even Paul.”



*Irrespectively of Scriptures*, they had good means of knowing about the things now given to us in Scripture. We do not see among them any such leader in their "fiery trial" (1 Pet. iv. 12, cp. i. 7) as Polycarp, on a like occasion long after (A.D. 155), will be in Smyrna. But among them there doubtless are not a few of that class—"the elders,"—worthies surviving from the first generation,—contemporaries of John and other apostles, whose apostolic tradition will be so carefully collected by Papias, and so sacredly guarded by Irenæus. Some of those "elders" probably heard Paul's preaching at the foundation of the Bithynian Christianity. And, were it only in connection with the Pauline movement in Asia Minor, *there is nothing of material importance in either apostolic history or apostolic testimony regarding "the Lord and His miracles"* (the expression of Irenæus), *recorded in the Gospels and Epistles, that could fail to be known about by the Bithynian Christians of A.D. 110 through oral instruction of contemporaries of apostles and "apostolic men";*—and in this respect the Bithynian church is only a sample of the Christianity of that early time, that happens to have come to our knowledge through the official report of a persecuting heathen magistrate in the locality.

Pliny shows a something of knowledge of the real character of the martyr church, where Tacitus plainly knows nothing of it. And the state of Christianity thus coming into view presents more than one aspect of interest relatively to apologetics in the primitive church history. Thus,—

1. *The general character* of Christian apology at the outset can be understood in the light of that state of things. It largely consisted in explanation regarding the main substantive nature of this religion, as a service of the living God and Redeemer; and particularly in answering "calumnies" that were in the air,—to the effect, *e.g.*, that the Christians were "atheists" (they did not worship "the gods," nor any *visible* thing); that they ate the flesh of infants ("eat the flesh of the Son of Man"?); that they held secret meetings for the practice of abominations. The Bithynian inquisition had a good effect of so far placing this matter rightly on record of the empire; and we may suppose that after this the "calumnies" were not

seriously believed by intelligent heathens,—magistrates or others,—who really inquired into the matter. But very many—witness the case of Tacitus—even of intelligent heathens, made no real inquiry. The calumnies were thoughtlessly repeated, to murderous effect of causing Christianity to be popularly regarded as a conspiracy of ghouls (cp. “generation of vipers”) to be anyhow stamped out. Not only the earliest apologists had thus to make explanations. The explanations had to be repeated by their successors long after they had been once published.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the mental condition of heathenism relatively to matters of religion was not such as to call for anything elaborate in apologetic argument or exposition. The question was simply between the living God, now revealed in Christ as offered Saviour and future Judge, and on the part of heathenism, either false gods of the peoples or a “no god” of civilisation (Acts xvii. 23 ; 1 Cor. i. 21). To the Scriptures of this new religion there was little or no reference; beyond, perhaps, allusion<sup>2</sup> to the existence of such vouchers, or some indication of their character.<sup>3</sup> Great stress was laid on *resurrection*, with its joyful hope; and on “the monarchy,” or the unity of divine government of the world. But in substance the primitive apology is as simple almost as that of the Samaritan woman and of the Jerusalem born-blind man (John iv., ix.), though a philosopher like Justin Martyr might have speculation at some points. *The City of God*—fifth century, by Augustine—was a Theodicy, or a “philosophy of religion,” rather than a Christian apologetic of the primitive type.<sup>4</sup>

2. *Christianity was now fully recognised, and proscribed, as a new distinct religion.* At the close of the second

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, Athenagoras of Athens formally answered the above-cited calumnies in his *Embassy*--addressed to the “philosopher” Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, by Aristides, in the earliest known Apology.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.*, by Justin Martyr—whose Apologies were until recently deemed the earliest extant—stating that memoirs of Christ called “gospels” were habitually read in Christian congregational worship.

<sup>4</sup> A most elaborate answer to merely naturalistic *philosophy* (Col. ii. 8) of heathenism, Cudworth’s *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, might be profitable reading for some “scientists” now.

century, Tertullian—"the apologist" of the western or Latin church, as Justin Martyr (though resident at Rome) was of the Greek or eastern church—bitterly complained, that they were put to death *simply as Christians* (cp. 1 Pet. iv. 16, iii. 16), without (see Acts xxv. 16) opportunity for self-justification if they adhered to this name. He and others appealed to the fact that, saving in this matter of professed Christianity, they were exemplary citizens, praying for magistrates, and ready to suffer like their neighbours for proved offence against the laws. On the other hand, they did not speak of the emperors and their official representatives as monster Neros, taking delight in mere cruelty: they rather appeared to lean on those in authority as more or less to be relied on for some restraining influence relatively to otherwise ungoverned impulses of popular passion, on fire with a sort of zeal for heathen religion, which might be felt as a heathenish holy-water sanction to hatred, greed, and lust.

And, in fact, Pliny evidently had no love of persecuting: nor presumably had his master Trajan, the only emperor to whom the Roman people ever gave the title of "the good." It was one of the paradoxes of those strangely evil times, that usually the good emperors were the great persecutors, not excepting "the philosopher" Marcus Aurelius, whose stoicism in combination with a superstition which it condemns, seems to have operated on a weak mind in making a man otherwise just and benevolent to be the most unshrinkingly ruthless of all persecutors:—going to the extreme of *lawlessly* violating, not only common humanity by outrage even on corpses of martyrs, but the majesty of the Roman State in the persons of free citizens.<sup>1</sup> What thus comes into full view is the fact that, at the time of the Bithynian persecution and subsequently, it was *simply Christianity* that was persecuted unto death, while the persecutor, so making war against this religion, was primarily the sovereign State. Christian apology thus had to be in large measure *an appeal, against a spiritual tyranny incarnated in that State, to natural principles of liberty and justice as well as mercy*;—in support of which appeal there came defensive representations of the real nature of this

<sup>1</sup> By inflicting *servile* tortures or death-punishments on them.

religion, and the grounds of its claim to be received as true and divine.

A formidable result of State recognition of the distinctness of Christianity as a new religion was, to make the simple profession of it a capital offence before the law. Pliny's letter to Trajan was not simply a report regarding the Christians, and their trial and punishment up to this date. It sought the emperor's authoritative judgment on the question, whether a man was to be punished for Christianity if no other offence were proved against him. The emperor's *Rescript* (official answer), while (in words) providing for making the administration of the law as lenient as its nature would permit, yet left no room for doubting the necessity of carrying the law into force; and the imperial action in this case regulated the after course of judicial procedure until the heathen empire gave place to that of Constantine the Great.

Trajan might plead the fact, that the law was not of his making. It was an immemorial constitution of the Roman State, older than the empire, perhaps older than the Republic. "The law of ceremonies (= religions)," under which the persecutions were carried on, made religion to be so a matter of State, that non-conformity to the religion was legally equivalent to repudiation of the State: so that persistency in it was to be visited with punishment of blackest high treason,— "That soul shall be cut off from among the people." When Rome through foreign conquest had grown into an empire, her policy, admirably flexible while strong, allowed to subject peoples a liberty of practising their own religions (*religiones licitæ*), so long and so far as it did not either disturb the Roman religion, or interfere with the public order of the empire. But the Christians were *not a people* or nation. They were only an aggregate of individuals collectively without a home, in this way "strangers and pilgrims" upon earth (1 Pet. ii. 11). Consequently the political exemption, of *national* religions, from operation of "the law of ceremonies," was not available for the purpose of making Christianity a tolerated religion (*religio licita*)—since it was not national.

Previously to the Neronian outbreak the matter had not come to this. It was not as a *Christian* accused by Roman law that Paul went from Cæsarea to a Roman prison. It



was as a Roman citizen, appealing to his emperor against legal persecution by Jerusalem Jews. But within two years of that, the "huge multitude" of martyrs were slain by Roman law, not for burning the city, but for persistently professing Christianity. Down to this time (see Acts xviii. 14, 15, xxiii. 29), Roman magistracy, even in Palestine, if its attention should be called to this new religious movement, saw in it only a new phase of Judaism, perhaps occasioning squabbles between rival sects of that religion.<sup>1</sup> Nor does it appear that at any time previous to the Neronian outbreak there had been, on the part of Roman imperialism, any thought of seeing in Christianity a distinct religion from Judaism, in such a sense as to place it outside of the toleration which was accorded to Judaism as being a *national* religion: that is, for thirty years after the great Pentecost.

But, very near the close of the two years after Paul first entered a Roman prison, *something happened*, that brought the distinctness of Christianity, as *not* simply a new phase of Judaism, under cognisance of Roman magistracy, as a ground of judicial action in application of "the law of ceremonies." What that something was or may have been—the breath of air that loosened the avalanche into a so destructive movement—remains an unsolved question of history at this hour: though there have been guesses, about some female Jewish influence in the imperial palace, that operated as a fire-spark in kindling a conflagration, long-lasting and wide-spreading, as compared with which the few days' burning of the great imperial city was a mere nothing. A something that so operated there must have been. For suddenly—as "a bolt from clear sky"—the old immemorial constitution broke out, like a long-slumbering volcano now awakening, into the terrific fury of that first "great" persecution against the Christians as professing an unlicensed religion (*non licita*).

While the immediate visible occasion, of the first appearance of that *star*, of a publicly-recognised clear distinctness of Christianity from all other religions, may have been a freak

<sup>1</sup> Paul himself (Acts xxvi. 7; Phil. iii. 3) to the last maintained that the new religion was the true old national religion: from which it will follow that (Acts ix. 5) in persecuting Jesus he had been a persecutor of Moses and the prophets.

of moral madness in the emperor, a certain previous process, as of struggle toward the manifestation, is illustrated in the following Note:—

NOTE *on the rising of the name of "Christian."*<sup>1</sup>—In the New Testament it occurs only three times (Acts xi. 26, xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 16), and there, apparently not as taken by the followers of Jesus to themselves, but as given to them by outsiders. But it does not appear that His followers were unwilling to be known by this name: which in itself is most appropriate (see Matt. xvi. 16–19; cp. Mark viii. 29), as meaning that their religion is founded in belief of His being the Christ or Messiah. It is the name by which they have spoken of themselves ever since the apostolic age; as distinguished, *e.g.*, from "Nazarenes," as they were called by unbelieving Jews. *Christian* is also the name under which they from the first appeared in the records of heathen world-empire: namely, at and after the time of the Neronian persecution, in which the empire first recognised the existence of this religion as a distinct thing in the world.

Tacitus, in his account of the persecution, not only employs the name as an historian—writing fifty years after the event. He expressly states that it was the name in use at the time of the event among the commonalty at Rome, for designation of the adherents of the religion. And in Suetonius, his contemporary (*The Twelve Cæsars*), we find what may be regarded as a reason for thinking that among that commonalty the use of the name had perhaps begun with the earliest noticeable appearance of the religion at Rome,—which (see Rom. i. 8; cp. Acts ii. 10) may have been very soon after the day of the great Pentecost. In addition to saying that "the Christians" were chastised by Nero, he elsewhere states ("Claudius") that in the preceding reign the Jews (or, Jews) were expelled from Rome (cp. Acts xviii. 2—where observe "Claudius") on account of disturbances they incessantly made at the instigation of "Chrestus." *Chrestus*, not Hebrew, means "gracious" or "meek"; and by a Roman policeman it might, in the din of disturbances, easily be confounded with *Christus*:<sup>2</sup> as, a century after Suetonius wrote, according to Tertullian, *Chrestianus* was mistakenly employed instead of *Christianus* by Latin-speaking heathen Romans in North Africa (so in the time of Justin Martyr and of Lactantius).

The first appearance of the new religion at Rome would be (see Acts ix. 15, 20, 22) in the Jewish quarter, in the syna-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. above, pp. 45, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Greek for *anointed*—Hebrew, *Messiah*.

gogue, "proclaiming Jesus, that He is the Son of God," and "confounding the Jews" by "proving that this is the Christ" (R.V.—cp. Acts vi. 7–14). We know what effect such a first appearance produced in Syria and Asia Minor (Acts ix. 23, xiii. 45, xiv. 19); and (xviii. 17) in Europe, so as to come under notice of Roman magistracy after the expulsion (A.D. 52) of Jews from Rome. In disturbances thus arising, the name *Christus* may well have been confusedly much heard; and at Rome confounded with *Chrestus*, long before that expulsion: as at Antioch the disciples were called *Christians* long before it, at the very beginning of Claudius' reign (*regn.* A.D. 41–A.D. 54). A century after that time, it was stated by Justin Martyr, in his *Discussion with Jew Trypho* (understood to have been really held, perhaps at Ephesus, *circa* A.D. 140), that the Jews were in the habit, in the lands of their dispersion, of sending delegations to places expressly for the purpose of, in the synagogues, denouncing the Nazarenes. But<sup>1</sup> *Christian* had long before his time come to be the world-imperial use and wont of speech for designation of this religion and its belongings;—so that heathenism ("Saul among the prophets"?) has from the beginning been unwittingly a witness to the apologetic fact, that Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be Jehovah's Christ.

This pause on the origin of the received name of "Christian" is perhaps not waste of time; were it only on account of the distinctness which it gives to our apprehension of the fact, that precisely *Christianity*—the Bible *religion*—was, more or less clearly in men's view, in that primitive period the real object of both assault and vindication or defence. The same fact might be further illustrated from the history of the Gnostic heresies, whose general true inward nature came to be disclosed in their giving place to—the fruit after that blossoming—heathen Manichæism, with its doctrine of a duality of creative principles, and of the essential evil of matter: a doctrine subversive of the fundamental Christian principle of "the monarchy" (*i.e.* unity of divine governmental headship of the universe). It appeared most vividly in heathen antipathy to the Christian doctrine of the resurrection (cp. Acts xvii. 15–32; 1 Cor. xv.; 1 Pet. i. 3–12); which, though it be (2 Tim. i. 10) the restoration of a lost hope of humanity, was opposed—*e.g.*, at the "great" persecution of the Christians of Lyons and Vienna—in the

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 45, etc.

interest of the heathen religions, as well as at the dictation or impulse of merely naturalistic heathen philosophies (see Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20). But we now will dwell only on a broader aspect of the subject, which influenced the imperial statesmanship of the period, and in whose light *the situation* relatively to Christian apologetics becomes more clearly and fully unfolded into view.

We observed that the Roman "law of ceremonies," older than the Empire, was perhaps older than the Republic. The principle of the law,—namely, the principle that non-conformity to the State religion is a treasonous repudiation of the State,—appears to have entered immemorially into the working constitutions of the heathen peoples generally.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in the most ancient of the world-empires, Nebuchadnezzar, in casting Jehovah's persistent witnesses into the fiery furnace, was impelled not only by the personal pride of sovereignty, but by regard to the imperilled honour of the Babylonian *State* as bound up in public recognition of its "gods" (Dan. iii. 18); and Darius was restrained, in his personal impulse to save Daniel, who had offended only "concerning the law of his God" (Dan. vi. 5–8), by a State necessity of dealing with the matter as placed unalterably under "the law of the Medes and Persians." So more clearly as to the more recent empires of the West. At the noon of Greek civilisation in democratic Athens, Xenocrates was banished ("excommunicated") on account of "atheism" of his physical speculations ("as a scientist"?); Socrates was put to death on the ground of his having "introduced new gods" (a nerve that still is sensitive at Acts xvii. 18–20—though paradoxically, as if in a corpse, see ver. 23);<sup>2</sup> and the "philosophers" as a class, far from the erst moral nobleness of Socrates, their "prince," now have for centuries evaded the responsibility of belief, or non-belief, by a shamefulness of outwardly conforming to religions which they really disbelieve and scorn (cp. 1 Cor. i. 21–23).

Nevertheless Roman statesmanship tolerated non-Roman

<sup>1</sup> It is stated by Professor Hearn—*The Aryan Household*—that in the original clan or patriarchy the vital principle of unity was not only blood relationship, but in higher degree community of religion.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. case of Professor Huxley above, p. 22.



religions which were *national*. Nor do we find that heathen peoples ordinarily felt under a religious obligation to make war against the foreign religions of other peoples, as in the Mohammedan propagandism, and to some extent in the professedly Christian (see John xviii. 36) Crusades, as well as in Israel's war of conquest in Canaan. For the heathen *theology* (if we may so speak) involved a provision for mutual toleration of "the religions" among themselves—if toleration be not a misnomer where there is no occasion for offence to be borne with. On the principles of that theology of "gods many," the Athenians, though they should be perfect in loyalty to their own patron *Athēnē*, might feel under no constraint of conscience to oppose Diana-worship at Ephesus. Every deity had his or her own region or clientage among the peoples, as every "lord" bishop has his own diocese, and every master his own school: so that there need not be any conflict of the spiritual jurisdictions; but "the religions" can peacefully dwell side by side like the established churches of adjacent countries, and their respective devotees can even mingle together in harmony, like the various Christian denominations in a typical Scottish parish. But, as was proclaimed (Jonah i. 9), before the time of Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylon, by the first missionary of Bible religion to the heathen, Christianity (Matt. x. 34) refuses to enter such a "happy family," and makes *heathenish* "peace on earth" impossible for mankind.

Claiming to be the religion of the living and only true God, it makes all "the religions" to be false. Claiming for that God to be alone worshipped, it prohibits all idolatry on peril of eternal death. And in this relation Christianity, though coinciding with Judaism in monotheism of principle, differs widely from it in application of that principle; since now the time has come (Acts xvii. 30) for *iconoclastic* application, through openly calling all men into this new kingdom of the one true religion. To the apprehension of heathen mankind, Judaism was not only ridiculous or preposterous, in its hallucination of worshipping only what is invisible, but irritating in its arrogance of claiming sole possession of true knowledge of God, and hateful in its cruel exclusiveness, in limiting that supremely precious possession to one people.

But the Jews, though in a zeal for proselytism (Matt. xxiii. 15) individuals among them might go far, yet as a people were not officiously propagandist. Rather, they not only were passive in allowing other peoples to sit unvisited in the darkness which is death's advancing shadow, but might appear as being, in a strange inhuman sectarianism, disposed to keep their knowledge exclusively to themselves, as if *grudging* the admission of other peoples into the blessed sunlight.

Christianity, on the other hand, was propagandist all-pervasively as light and flame. And in so being it was everywhere destructive of the old religions utterly. Wherever it found a lodgment,—in any community, family, individual,—there the old religions found their death. *Apollyon*!—"Destroyer"!—what could be done with it, but be beforehand with it in destroying?

And to magistracy the suppression of it was not only an interest of the State religion, but a necessity of existence for the heathen State itself. It may safely be said that neither Pliny nor Trajan had any religious feeling whatever, in the sense of real affection for the heathen "gods," or adoring reverence in the service of them. So as to the generality of heathens of their standing in the empire: though in individuals—like "the philosopher" Marcus Aurelius—there might be a sort of unbelieving superstition in combination with a theoretical or practical atheism. And for generations this mental condition of the cultured classes had been coming to be, more and more widely and deeply, the general condition of the peoples in the "civilised" lands.

One of the strangest things in that strangely trying time was, that thus *the religions*, on whose behalf there was, with a sort of earnestness, that warfare of murderous persecutions, *were not seriously believed in* by the persecutors. Men like Marcus Aurelius might tremble without believing. And among the commonalty of devotees of the old religions there might be a sort of *make-belief* in them—as more anciently on the part of Baal's priesthood (2 Kings xviii.)—working itself up into a half-simulated rage. But what there was of religion in all that was only a despairing blind thing, like the superstition which "the philosopher" emperor had drawn in

with his idolatrous mother's milk. Accordingly, when the sun of Christianity came to be in the ascendant, "the religions" were helpless as darkness against light. They withdrew into remote obscurities to hide their lingering infamy of dying out, and be no longer known to educated mankind except as a "paganism"<sup>1</sup> of vulgar ignorance.

In the centres of population and intelligence, and among the educated everywhere, heathenism—as appeared in the result of the apostate Emperor Julian's attempt at a revival of it—was irretrievably dead and gone from civilised human life. It may be said that Socrates was the last of really educated heathen Greeks who retained a serious operative belief in God. And when Christianity came, the Athenian altar-inscription (Acts xvii. 23), "to deity unknown," only disclosed the public secret of the spiritual condition of the civilised heathen peoples generally (1 Cor. i. 13–21; Eph. ii. 12).

Still, in the persecutions there came into view a sort of paradoxical insincere sincerity, like "the philosopher" emperor composing pious platitudes about a God and providence he does not believe in, while massacring innocents he is most sacredly bound to protect. The incoherence appears dramatically in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, in a heathen speaker's argument against Christianity on two hollow grounds which destroy each other,—1. the old religions ought to be believed in because they are received among mankind,—2. it is preposterous arrogance in such people as the Christians to profess to know God, seeing that nothing can be really known about Him even by men truly wise ("agnosticism"). In the action of the populace, the farce of that incoherence ran into tragedy most terrifically real.

The letter of the Lyonnese martyr church quotes the saying of Christ, "Whosoever killeth you shall think he doeth God service." There was a kind of zeal for religion in the popular clamour for "Christians to the lions,"<sup>2</sup> as no doubt there had been in the Ephesian shouting of glory to Diana! But the Ephesian orthodoxy had an eye to "our

<sup>1</sup> *Paganus*, Latin for "villager, rustic."

<sup>2</sup> Cp. the rustics eagerly bringing fuel to the burning of Jerome of Prague, who said, *O sancta simplicitas!* But the illustration is at bottom really one of contrast profound.

craft" in danger, and the Roman populace, in their religious services of persecution, were providing for a lust of cruelty that had been pampered by feeding on gladiatorial shows; while, when the famishing tiger of popular fury is let loose on Christian despisers of "the gods," greed and baser lusts enter, far more than reverence for "the gods," into rabblements by worshippers of "the gods" who do not believe in them. Alike in blinded rabble and in "philosophic" emperor, we are confronted with that paradox of insincere sincerity, *which made the apologetic appeal to reason a task of seeming hopeless difficulty*, like chaining the wind or binding the flame.

The *political* motive is here thus far disclosed, that worldly politicians, in order to rule the wave of popular movements, will obey it. But a motive to so supporting religions that were not believed in, lay also in the belief of statesmen, that maintenance of "the religions" was necessary to continued existence of the State, even though their hollow falseness were fatal to its well-being: *poisoned* blood may sustain the body's life in a lingering existence, while bloodlessness is immediate certain death. And here we see *one great abiding cause* of that unappeasable political hostility, so furious in its early first appearance, and so desperate in its long-enduring tenacity, by which the world-imperial heathenism was ultimately self-destroyed. The mortal enmity to the new religion, that so flamed up in the world's capital when the religion first appeared there in a clear distinctness, would not have so endured through the centuries of the persecutions if there had not been a cause of it, first, in the fact that heathenism is killed by Christianity as darkness is killed by light; while, second, to political worldly wisdom it appeared that the death of heathen religionism would be fatal to the State, as if the life-blood were withdrawn from that body politic.

And in fact it is fatal to the heathen State, as regeneration crucifies the old Adam. Christians, where it prevailed in a community, made all things new, so that old things passed away: creating a new social nature in the citizen, it effaced the old State collectively, as the antediluvian sociology of Cainites was washed out of the world by the flood (2 Pet. iii. 6). And in particular, *the governmental*



sovereignty of mankind was completely changed by it, through being transferred from man to God. The heathen religions, deemed a life's-blood of the whole collective community, and consequently invested with so stringent a domination over individual men, came to be themselves a department or function of the collective community—a socialism which was their spiritual death. Through that heathen Erastianism it came about that not only the emperor was a god, as the Pharaoh had been a god, but also the democracy was sovereign in religion. The democratic *State*, as truly as the aristocratic or the monarchical, is what was really served (*dulia*) when "the gods" were formally worshipped (*latria*).<sup>1</sup> And *that State* was destroyed, made new-naturally impossible, where Christianity came into commanding power, with its worship of the living God, the Creator and Ruler of all, its kingdom of Christ, distinct from the kingdoms of this world and in spiritual things not subject to them, its liberty of individual conscience and right of private judgment.

But as a cause of causes at the root of all, there was the fact that the world lay in wickedness. The powers which externally were an organised opposition to "the gospel of the kingdom," were inwardly controlled and ruled by a soul of that essential wickedness of godlessness which is constituted by worldliness. Unless we see the antagonism that is thus deeply rooted operative as mainspring in the antagonism which was "encountered" (Acts xvii. 18), we cannot comprehend the problem with which Christian apologetics had to deal—and has to deal (John v. 39–41, xv. 24).

## SEC. 2. "*The Apologists*" and their *Martyr Church*.

THE APOLOGISTS.—Origen, by far the greatest writer and thinker among them, may, though he flourished in the middle of the third century, yet be placed as a second century *apologist*; inasmuch as Celsus, whom—in his *Contra Celsum*—at every step he closely follows in refutation, is understood to

<sup>1</sup> On behalf of Romanism, it has been contended that, while the homage of *latria* can be lawfully given only to God as supreme, a secondary worship of *dulia* may be lawfully given to creatures. See *latria* as highest worship ("serve") at Matt. iv. 10.

have written in the second century.<sup>1</sup> Though, as Baur says, the objections of Celsus are strikingly the stock-in-trade of objectors to Christianity at this hour, yet the silence of second century Christianity regarding him and his *Alethos Logos* ("True Reason" or "Account") may go to show, along with other evidences more direct, that the kind of detailed "criticism," which now plays a part so great in both attack and defence, had little part if any in the defensive or offensive warfare of second century Christianity: except in so far as (witness Justin's *Dialogus cum Tryphone Judæo*, and in lower degree Tertullian's *Adversus Judæos*) it might have place in controversy with heretics or Jews (cp. Tit. i. 14). The fine spirited discussion in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, between a Christian and educated heathen friends, may be placed in the second century, though there is not evidence conclusively fixing its date: it is such as *might* have taken place in that century as otherwise known to us. In the conversation—which resembles those in Cicero's imitations of Platonic dialogue—there is on the Christian's part, in fragmentary indication, a *view of Christianity*, such as in those days a believer might have introduced in a conversation with heathens who were his personal friends: such an outline as had in a measure been filled up, at the beginning of the century, in the beautiful anonymous *Letter to Diognetus*.<sup>2</sup>

In the *Octavius* we can see what appears in the early-primitive apologists as a class, that at that time, in discussion with heathens, who, of course, did not recognise any divine *authority* in the Christian Scriptures, Christians might ordinarily have little or no call for express or formal reference to these,—such as, for instance, was constituted by the assault of Celsus, handling Christianity in the manner of modern infidel successors. Into such discussion, also, there did not much enter the *positive Christian* doctrine that is represented by *The Apostles' Creed*,<sup>3</sup>—excepting the grand essentials of Resurrection and the being of a living personal

<sup>1</sup> Namely, his assault on Christianity (his *Logos*), against which Origen writes *apologia*.

<sup>2</sup> Placed among the few brief extant writings of "apostolic fathers"—*i.e.* fathers who had been contemporary with one or more apostles.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix to this section below.

God, Redeemer, and Judge. What came out explicitly—the artillery on front of battle—was rather the *idea* of Christianity, realised in the Church's new true life, as compared with the working principles and practices of heathenism, and with its philosophical speculations—Stoical, Epicurean, Neoplatonic—now running to seed. But *in the mind of the apologists there does not appear any view of primeval Christian history or doctrine that they might not have been derived from our canonical New Testament Scriptures.*

From the first appearance (*circa* A.D. 130—Aristides and Quadratus) of the real working apology, in published appeal to the common reason of mankind, a commanding place was occupied in the Christian representation by a *claim to common justice* on behalf of this religion, with reclamation, in the name of natural piety and humanity, against the shameful wrong of endeavouring to repress or to extirpate such a thing as religion,—the soul's free life of reason and of conscience toward God,—by mere violence of persecution, though it should be under forms of law. Representations of the real nature of the religion in question—*e.g.*, in answer to foul "calumnies" that were current—naturally did not go beyond the manner of life that was called in question; and included only general references to evidence, accessible and intelligible to the heathens addressed, by which the religion, pure and wholesome in its nature, is shown to be true and divine. But while the representations now are in a measure antiquated, were it only through their own success in causing the religion to be rightly understood and believed, the references to Christian evidences that are pertinent for all times were of quite an elementary character as compared with elaborateness of the modern apologetics,—in which the production of evidence is what occupies the foreground, and the argument is gone about as if leisurely at full length, in principle and through great and small details.

Though Tatian, a "follower" of Justin Martin (*circa* A.D. 160), afterwards fell away into heresy, the apologists as a class appear to have been remarkably free from that *selfism* <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hæresis* is Greek for "seeking" (= *craving*). "The principles which lead to heresy are the same in every age,—a love of novelty, a spirit of

of ambition which (Acts xx. 30) may run into heresiarchy. And in their warfare leadership had no prizes for worldliness more commonplace. The toil of battle or campaign consisted much in simply suffering, which made no distinction of ranks, —*e.g.*, a "pale death striking equally at regal palaces and hovels of the poor." Even the apology, while emitted by individuals, was a common utterance of the suffering brotherhood,—a heart's cry of the whole Church through one spokesman. The apologist was rarely in leading Christian office (as the prophets in Israel were not officially priests). Ordinarily he was simply—like David in the valley of Elah—the protagonist of the brotherhood, with perhaps a consequent primacy of interest in the charge (Rev. ii. 10), "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (R.V.). In the letter of the Lyonnese martyr church, we perceive that death is the fee of Vettius Epagathos on account of his activity as "the advocate of the Christians," and that this appears to be deemed matter of course.

The essentially practical nature of the service that thus was called for at the hand of apology, is illustrated by a critical observation of historians of doctrine, that the Christian literature of the early primitive period exhibited almost nothing of creative originality<sup>1</sup> (cp. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2). Suppose

enthusiasm, a passion for notoriety, an ambition of domination, a tendency to accommodate the truths of the gospel to prevailing systems of philosophy, or to the current maxims of morals, a gnosticising or mysticising or legalising spirit" (Welsh at p. 28 of the work referred to in a footnote further on). Cunningham, Welsh's colleague (see the said footnote), once said to a student, with reference to a flagrant case of disloyalty to truth, "Nothing makes such a scoundrel of a man as vanity." "Ambition of domination" is what Paul saw in the "grievous wolves" (Acts xx. 28-31). Worldliness (Matt. vi. 21-24; John v. 39-47), as a "Socinus at the root," making a man to be as chaff in wandering fickleness, was noted in the fundamental psalm of characterisation (Ps. i.). Its tendency to separatism is distinctly marked, with reference to actual cases, by Paul (2 Tim. iv. 10) and by John (1 John ii. 19), in the "last words" of both apostles to mankind. Specialised by Welsh in his summary, "a gnosticising or mysticising or legalising spirit," it begins to appear in his "love of novelty"; as Paul's "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world," deepens and broadens into the Johannine, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; . . . *they went out*, that they might be made manifest they were not all of us."

<sup>1</sup> Namely, the period to which a "higher" criticism, distinctively



it had been conceivable that Polycarp and other "elders" of his day should have allowed a 2 *Peter* to creep into the church under their care (see Acts xx. 28-30) in the wake of a genuine 1 *Peter* (Acts xx. 28): suppose, in other words, that the Christians in Asia (1 Pet. i. 1; 2 Pet. iii. 1) and other regions addressed by the imposture were all asleep. But the enemy who sowed the tares: "what was he, whence was he, whither did he tend"? The marvellously gifted ubiquitous impostor who composed the lying Scripture, with its false face of a rotten heart, the *inimitable* "scriptural style," of authoritative tender sanctity? Though there had been abstractly possible the mean villainy of forgery so strangely blending with heavenly spiritual unction—yet here the forger, and the unaccountable passion for martyrdom that must have worked in a knave so incurring risk of infamous death, temporal as well as eternal, by the fraudulency, seem completely out of place and time. And if he *was* in that early primitive period, copiously producing Scriptures which by stealth took possession of the Christian world, his power of self-effacement must have been more great and marvellous than even his other gifts. Were it only in the one element of creative literary originality, nowhere among the Christians of that all but primeval time do we see so much as a trace of the raw material for the making of such a monster-miracle of manhood.

Nowhere do we find it among the apologists, the most gifted and enterprising Christian leaders of the period. We know how it went with a heretic so able and shifty as Marcion (Tert. *Adversus Marc.*) in his manipulation (*circa* A.D. 140) of Paul's Epistles and Luke's Gospel: though apparently he was no forger, writing spurious epistles or gospels, but only a corrupter, "shaping" received apostolic Scriptures to suit his own views of doctrine. The Tübingen "historical" theorising was unhistorical in this respect, that *the forger* on whom it builds is a manifest impossibility among the Christians of that time,—even though there had existed no church capable of guarding against invasion by such "grievous wolves" with a spurious New Testament Scripture.

"historical," would assign the amazingly original creation of a forged New Testament Scripture, with invention of New Testament history!

But further, though there had been the ability, and the depraved inclination, for that kind of work among the writing Christians, there was not the opportunity: as David, in wager-of-battle front of Israel and of the Philistines, cannot sit down to weeks and months of studious invention of miraculous new implements and methods of war and peace. The heretics, perhaps as early as A.D. 120 (Basilides and Valentinus), might copiously write misleading books (*even on the Scriptures, e.g., on our Gospels*); since that was their only work—as “grievous wolves” (Acts xx. 29)—while the work of guarding Christianity was being done by the true shepherds. These, too, in particular cases,—*e.g.,* Papias, Melito of Sardis, Irenæus,—might have opportunity along with inclination, while quietly feeding Christian flocks, for putting the best fruits of their ministerial studies into writing for a wider enduring usefulness among mankind. But from the beginning of the distinctively “apologetic” period (say A.D. 130)—that is, all through the time where unbelieving “historical” criticism mainly placed the marvellous production of forged New Testament Scriptures—the capable real Christians known to history must have had their minds and hearts and lives full of the honest godly work that is represented by “apologetic,” as the historical name of the period.

In respect of knowledge and ability, “the apologists” were no doubt adequately furnished for the work which thus fell to them. Aristides, Quadratus, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, originally were “philosophers” formed in the Greek schools. Tertullian was a very able Roman lawyer, who wrote books in Greek (not now extant) as well as in Latin. Irenæus and Tatian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen represent a new learning of Christianity itself in connection with the Scriptures and their teaching. And apart from such particular hall marks, in Minucius Felix<sup>1</sup> and Theophilus of Antioch,<sup>1</sup> there appears the same general qualification for fairly well stating the case for Christianity as it fell to be stated by them. From the character of the actual apologies of the

<sup>1</sup> Theophilus (*Ad Autolyicum*) is a really powerful writer; and Felix (*Octavius*) is really better entitled to the name of “the Christian Cicero” than Lactantius (at the close of the period).

period that have reached us, we can understand that, *in the situation* then existing, the requisite qualification was comparatively elementary, such as presumably was, when called for by circumstances, to be found in individuals all over the Christian world.

Still, the work to which they were called in providence,—the work which in historical fact they did,—was not (excepting Origen) one of creative original thinking. Of biblical criticism they had,<sup>1</sup> in their controversy with heathenism, little or no need: the Christianity defended by them being only the elementary religion of all Christians. Nor had they any call for profundity of heathen learning: the religions and philosophies they had to contend with being in like manner only popular, what—so far like the true wisdom—cried in the streets. And no Christian of the second century exhibits any such commanding originality as appears in Origen and Augustine, in Anselm and Calvin. Our gain from study of “the apologists” of the period has to be derived, not from luminous original thought on their part, but,—1. from the illustrations they furnish of the then existing mental condition of Christians, and state of mankind, relatively to apologetics, and,—2. and especially, from their exemplification of that *moral* character, the *confessor-and-martyr* spirit, of contending for man’s life in God’s truth, in respect of which they have never been excelled, if they have ever been equalled.

*They can have no real successors.* Like Melchisedek, they are unique in history. For even the most faithful witnesses for Christianity can never again be placed in that *situation*, which arose to the primitive apologists from their peculiar circumstances; in particular, the circumstance<sup>2</sup> that, while this religion, then in its infancy, was for the first time put on its trial before the world, that world, the judge in the case, was mortally hostile, so as to be deaf and blind to their apology. The judge had condemned the religion beforehand, and now would not even look into its reasons or listen to its pleadings (so, with great characteristic energy, Tertullian). Even the

<sup>1</sup> Since they seem to have ignored Celsus, if indeed they knew him. With *Jews* they might have “critical” discussion.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 14-16.

unbelieving world now listens,<sup>1</sup> while a listening Christendom assents, when this religion "gives a reason of the hope" which it inspires or constitutes. *The only period in all history in which the judge was absolutely deaf was precisely the only period in which this religion was on trial for its life among mankind.*

That paradox of the primitive apologetic situation ought to be dwelt on, in order to just appreciation of the moral significance of the primitive defence of Christianity, and the consequent apologetic significance of *the fact* of that defence. The *Letter to Diognetus* might be read by a heathen acquaintance of the writer.<sup>2</sup> And among circles of private friends there might be such free discussion as is exemplified in the *Octavius*. There might even be public debate, between a Justin and a Trypho—at the peril of the Christian's life. But the dominant world—the judge in the great case—had prejudged it; and now would not really hear,—but only strike. The official judge might feel that in fact he had no choice; that here his only office was to condemn. Pliny only obeys his emperor; who, again, in commanding, only applies to this new case the fundamental constitution for all such cases from past ages immemorial. Justin Martyr may at a later date reclaim against the outrage on natural justice, when the Roman city prætor dooms a man to death for simply, in answer to a question by the Court, owning himself a Christian. And on the same account, in Carthage fifty years after, Tertullian will be vehemently indignant when a "soldier of God" is condemned to the thorny crown of martyrdom because of his refusing, *as a Christian*, to wear a laurel crown of homage to Mars, in military procession in honour of the emperor. But we can see that by official administrators of the constitution the deadly violence to reason and conscience might be regarded as a necessity of *their* situation.

Not the less the situation was a fact, unique, as regards

<sup>1</sup> Some years ago, a deservedly famous real master in "scientism" said, that among his acquaintances the one thing discussed by every one was theology.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. the recently republished *Letters from Palmyra* by—an American—Dr. Ward.



apologetics, in all the historical experience of mankind. On the one hand, there was the Christian conscience toward God, with its *non possumus* ("we cannot"): as when Polycarp, entreated to save his aged life by a form of recantation, said to the heathen persecutors, "How *could* I deny Him, who to me has been ever a good Master through all the eighty-six years of my service?" as when the apostles, to the Jewish council, said, "*We cannot* but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts iv. 20); as long before (Gen. xxxix. 9), in Egypt, youthful Joseph had shielded himself against temptation with, "How *can* I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Manhood itself was on its trial, the moral life of mankind, in such a testing of the witnessing conscience: so that (Dan. iii. 18) in Babylon the three children, in the face of the world's empire, utter their sublime "and if not" as a protestation of the manhood that is in them, in a resolvedness not to stoop to the base falsehood of worshipping what is not God, even though the true God should not show Himself on their side. On the other hand, the last and greatest of the world-empires is here with its last word, "Thou shalt," where conscience toward God, and the dignity of manhood, say, "Thou shalt not"; while here Christianity is for the first and last time on its trial before mankind all against it, and the world's last hope of restoration of its lost life hangs on the turning of the scale,—a turning which, under God, is vitally dependent on unshrinking faithfulness of the protagonist Christian apologists.

In fact, the religion was condemned unheard:<sup>1</sup> not only by individuals in administrative office, but collectively by that world-empire, of whose will they might or might not be the willing instruments. And apart from this fact it is impossible to justly appreciate the quality of the service of the primitive apologists. Thus Justin, erst "philosopher," now writing as a Christian apologist, incidentally intimates that he is aware of being destined to be "martyr," were it only because (he knows) there is an enemy upon his track who is sure to hunt him down. Nor is this only because—as was said by Henri IV. when refusing to take precautions against assassination—any man is master of his neighbour's life who

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 14-16, etc.

is prepared to risk his own. Justin's enemy—the cynic philosopher Crescens, defeated in argument?—has on his side the law, the magistracy, the armed force of empire, the popular feeling, against any one denounced as a Christian. If Justin be simply informed against before a magistrate, the bare fact of his openly confessing Christ will place him as caught *flagrante delicto*—"red-handed" in the crime of that defiance to the State; as if Colonel Sleeman had caught a viper brood of Thugs in the very act of their worshipping by murder. What peculiarly exposed Justin to this peril was, his distinction as an apologist, in those writings of his which contributed so powerfully to the downfall of paganism in the Roman world. Truly he has need of all his confidence in the sovereign right of reason<sup>1</sup> to rule the universe, and the light-power of the truth to gain command of this world. Still more, perhaps he has (Heb. x. 36) "need of patience"—*endurance* (Heb. xii. 1)—of hope in the living God he serves through Christ, whose omnipotence alone can (Eph. v. 14) make the deaf to hear and (2 Cor. iv. 3-6) the blind to see;—as in Justin's own person—once a heathen and now a Christian witness—it has made the dumb to sing and the dead to live.

Though formally, in his two Apologies, addressing respectively the Emperor and the Senate, he perhaps has no real expectation that his pleading shall in any way be seriously considered by either of them. His form of addressing them may be only—as when Junius addressed a letter "To the King"—a mode of speaking to the whole community, as all interested in the matter of public right here in question, and responsible for the public injustice here denounced. If the Apologies of Aristides and Quadratus really were presented to Adrian at Athens,<sup>2</sup> the emperor may have looked into the matter for a moment, with some languid curiosity, in a spirit of dilettante illuminationism—as (Acts

<sup>1</sup> Justin is noted for a theory of the *Logos* ("reason," or—John i. 1—"word") which is eternally in God, that—as in scattered light rays from the sun—it is the reason in every individual man.

<sup>2</sup> The recent recovery of the long-lost Apology of Aristides is a veritable romance of literary history. Its terms appear to show that it in some way reached the emperor.

xvii. 18–21) becomes an amateur philosopher when at Athens. But as magistrate he might feel no call to seriously consider a pleading for toleration to this religion, more than if the pleading had been for abolition of private property on the plan of Plato's ideal socialist Republic. To his apprehension it might on the face of it be a proposal involving dissolution of the State, through abolition of the State religion which—though it be false—is as life's-blood in the actual working constitution of the political body. The same consideration of high State expediency may have given strength to the deadly sting of superstition and stoicism in "the philosopher" emperor's persecuting rage against the faith of Resurrection at Lyons and Vienne: so that he might only be further irritated into fury if he should read the *Oration* on the Resurrection which was published by Justin's later contemporary, Athenagoras.

As for the community, even in its enlightened classes, we may judge what kind of hearing—if any—a Christian apologist might expect on their part from the representation of their feeling in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix. There, perhaps toward the close of the century, a Roman gentleman, in serious conversation with a Christian socially his equal, speaks of the Christians (cp. 1 Cor. iv. 13) as (*fax*) a vile dregs of the community—a despicable scum of human kind. Suppose, then, that Aristides and Quadratus were in reality allowed to appear with their Apologies in the imperial presence. To the most enlightened heathen audience the matter might seem broadly farcical,—as if in our day two Central Africans were to appear before Queen Victoria and her Cabinet to plead for abolition of Christianity, of monarchy, and constitutional government, in favour of a communistic establishment of Mumbo-Jumboism in the British Empire.

To the natural apprehension of the apologists themselves, the work may well have seemed like bidding a mountain be removed and cast into the sea (cp. "the foolishness of preaching"); while they had not that provision against natural apprehensions which in the commonalty of believers might be constituted by unreflecting enthusiasm of a childlike faith. Whether "philosophers" by training or not, they were of the

intelligent reflecting class, of whom (1 Cor. i. 26) there were comparatively but few in the citizenship of the new kingdom. To men of their cultured habits and tastes (cp. *genus irritabile vatum*?—Hor.) it was naturally trying even to be liable to have their literary productions disregarded or worse, as when pearls are cast before swine. And from what is known of the then prevalent type of character among the “philosophers” or educated caste—selfish, worldly man-pleasers—it can be understood that a philosopher turning Christian tasted all the bitterness of “losing caste.”

NOTE on “*the paganism of a snob*.”—Its most offensive manifestation is in “university men” looking down (cp. Luke xviii. 11) on those who are not college bred as “Philistines.” Its typical representative among peoples is the heathen Chinese, despising non-Chinese human beings as outer barbarians. The Greeks, who introduced the usage and the word “barbarian”—meaning all non-Greeks—were thus the heathen Chinese of ancient peoples. Similarly, the Athenians were the heathen Chinese of Greece; the free citizens were the heathen Chinese of the Athenian population; and the philosophers, or “cultured” caste, were the heathen Chinese of all mankind. The barbarism of soul, the spiritual vulgarity, of academical priggishness talking about plain people as “Philistines,” was a debasing alloy in the teaching of Socrates, “the prince of philosophers”: as represented, *e.g.*, by the word *banauoi*,<sup>1</sup> so often found on the honeyed lips of Plato “the divine.” It ignores, yea rather sets at naught, the common humanity which is the only thing really great in any human being; as if that were only a dead fly in amber, while the precious amber itself is constituted by a culture which is the specialty of a few. The spirit thus appearing is essentially heathenish—ungodly in inhumanism. It of course is anti-Christian to the core: since Christianity (Acts xvii. 26; Ex. xix. 6; Col. iii. 11) makes all men to be one, as all classes alike are the children and in the image of God, originally by creation (Luke iii. 38) and now (Gal. iii. 28) by redemption. Its relation to the gospel is a state of war. And *this* war, in which to a Christian there is no remission, was to the primitive apologist—leaving “culture” to join “the dregs”—a peculiarly aggravated self-crucifixion, through operation of a law in his own members warring against the law of his spirit.

To one of a haughtily exclusive caste, it may have cost a

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *Philistines*.



very great and painful sacrifice to break with the society whose upper air had hitherto been his breath of life, and to his wonted associates now become as a *pariah*, sunk into the ignominy of despised "things which are not." It was to such an one a social doom of infamy in dreadful peril, from which there was no hope of deliverance but in death—while even after death there still would be infamy of the outcast one in the memory of those associates. The *shame* of the cross (Heb. xii. 2; Rom. i. 16; Matt. x. 38) in aggravation of its painfulness, would be most peculiarly bitter in such a case; and this *peculiar* vinegar and gall, of the self-crucifixion on the part of men of the cultured class, was no doubt with its greatest fullness in the cup of those who *stood out* as protagonist apologists.

What feeling they had to look for in the commonalty of heathens, outside of the cultured class, is shown in the famous graphite (*circa* A.D. 200?), on which a Christian is caricatured (1 Cor. i. 23) as "worshipping his God" under the form of a crucified man with an ass's head; while a kindred feeling in the cultured class is represented (*circa* A.D. 160) by the satyrist philosopher, Lucian's *Peregrinus*—a crazy philosopher, once turned Christian, who, at the impulse of an egotistical vaingloriousness, now burns himself to death in sight of a national gathering of the Greeks.<sup>1</sup> And the "what-will-this-babbler-say?" scornful incredulity of the philosopher class toward "the foolishness of the preaching,"<sup>2</sup> which Paul had seen rooted in the nature of a merely worldly culture, was no doubt most painful to the feelings of cultured Christians like the apologists,—to the uncultured Christian it might be matter of indifference.

The Runic inscription on the ancient cross at Ruthwell in Scotland now is found, when deciphered, to be a Saxon poem—by Caedmon?—in praise of *a hero running to the cross* (cp. Heb. xii. 2–4.—Homer has a foottrace of hero-princes

<sup>1</sup> It is not quite certain that this caricature means a Christian. It certainly does not mean an ordinary philosopher; *they*—as Lucian well knew—were the last men in the world to burn themselves on any account.

<sup>2</sup> *La prédication*: "the preaching" was in France another name for the Reformed religion, while correlatively the Romish religion was known as *La messe* ("the mass").

contending for the prize of "patience"—endurance—in that strain on the firmness of the fibre of manhood). The hero—*archēgos*—"author" of our faith, "for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising *the shame*." For Him, *the infamy* of the crucifixion was a thorny coronation of its painfulness (Gal. iii. 13; cp. Phil. ii. 5-8). The *self-humiliation* of His descending to it is (vers. 9-11) a theme of adoring praise of Him for all the rational universe of creatures. And in the primitive apologists there comes into view (cp. Heb. xii. 1) a peculiarly bright exemplification (Ps. cx. 4) of that "mind which was in Christ Jesus" when He *so* "made Himself of no reputation."

They shine in the front rank of imitators of His heroism of redeeming love (2 Cor. viii. 9). At the same time, and consequently, they contributed *a distinct addition to the evidence* on behalf of the religion of which they were volunteer advocates, with no earthly fee except (Phil. i. 29) the painful toil of so contending. A presumptive proof of the religion is constituted by the fact, simply, of its having been so defended. With all the world against it, it was embraced by multitudes of men who in embracing it took up the cross (1 Cor. xv. 19; Rom. viii. 36; 2 Cor. iv. 8-11), in a self-surrender to sufferings for which there is no conceivable cause but their conviction of God's truth. And on the part of the apologists there was a distinct addition to the evidence thus contributed by the commonalty of Christians,—in that these defenders of the faith, men of the highest grade of cultivated intelligence then existing among mankind, voluntarily underwent liability to a *peculiar* depth of suffering for the faith. Hence, among other causes, it is that they, of that period, are those who speak to us with power at this day.

THE APOLOGETIC CHURCH.—This description may be employed with full propriety, because not only the Church apologetics was not official, but also the apologists in their work were not professional writers, and in their persons were generally not ecclesiastical office-bearers. Nor were they as a class like some private Christians of our modern time, whose life is so much devoted to theological study that they might be placed among professional theologians. Their

appearance in the primitive Church did not resemble that of a *school* of the prophets. It might be represented as resembling rather the appearance of *judges* (lit. "deliverers") in ancient Israel,—individuals who, on emergent occasions of a public need, came forward from the ranks of the people to take leading action in the crisis, and when the crisis was past retired into the privacy from which they for the occasion had come forth.

This representation has so much of general correctness, that the apologetics of the period may be regarded as having in a real sense been an utterance of the whole Church's mind, through individuals coming at sundry times and in divers manners to be her spokesmen. And this itself gives a great augmentation of force to their individual testimonies; as the resistless momentum of the Macedonian phalanx charge was constituted by, not simply the line of spearmen on the front, but also and especially the pressure of the weight and impulse of a mass of combatants behind them. In the Christian phalanx, the mass behind contained an indefinite number of individuals qualified for fighting in the front rank, the defensive resources thus being virtually inexhaustible.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to our special question, how the Christian communities were placed in respect of means of proof of the religion,—originally there may have been comparatively little feeling of need of such means, beyond what means of proof was involved in the *existence* of the community such as it then was, in fresh living memory of its then recent original new creation in the apostolic age. Here again the dead have risen to bear witness. In the Catacombs of Rome, the burying-place of Christians during the whole period of the persecutions, archæology now has learned what must have been the social and moral character of this community of "strangers and pilgrims on the earth"; while a like revelation of heathen life at the beginning of the period has resulted from disinterment of long-buried Herculaneum and Pompeii. So there is shown, as visible matter of fact, that the primitive Christianity

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the Scottish nobility declaring, that the country would never submit to foreign domination so long as one hundred Scotchmen remained alive to draw sword for their country's freedom.

was in effect a new creation, individually and socially, of a lost mankind restored to loving purity and consequently happiness, looking forward with a joyful hope (1 Pet. i. 3-12). Men who had *seen* the first arising of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings to the dark despairing populations, possessed a kind of *knowledge*, of the self-evidential aspect of that sunrise, and of the world restored in its healing light, that has passed from the mankind of a later time. The spring-time has in it a self-evidence of new life that fills it, such as appears not in summer and in autumn. The Christians thus may have felt, and heathens around them may have seen, *the historical reality of a new creation*, with such clear distinctness that little or no formality of reasoning was requisite in logical support of the appeal, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

In the third century Origen spoke of wonderful things, in conversion of heathens, that had taken place under his own observation in Christian assemblies, through manifest operation of God there. He appears to regard those operations as having been miraculous in their nature. We do not need to suppose real miracle in the strict sense—of "extraordinary supernaturalism"—in order to be able to understand, that through the manifested presence of God in Christian assemblies very great effects might be produced in the way of awakening and converting unbelievers (Eph. v. 14). And we can believe that the influence of living Christianity in the Church on unbelievers coming into contact with her fellowship—an influence visibly in operation in our present day—may well have been at its highest in the primitive period of her history, when she herself was under power of a fresh living sense of new creative movement streaming from the apostolic age, and the world was under power of the fact of new creation as an historical reality freshly risen before its eyes. This, we remember, is the only kind of evidence laid before *Diognetus* by the author of the *Epistle* to him,—the only extant writing of an apostolic father that can be regarded as presenting an apologetic aspect: what he lays before his reader is simply a view of the new religion as a working reality, in the mind and heart and life of those embracing it.



The great stress that has been laid on the subject of *post-apostolic miracles*<sup>1</sup> in attestation of Christianity is not warranted by the place which the subject holds in Christian writings of the early-primitive period. It is not referred to until far down the second half of the second century; and then only very briefly by Irenæus, Tertullian, and Origen (middle of the third century); while their references to it are not of such a nature as to suggest the view, that even the fathers who make them were of opinion, that ecclesiastical miracle had a really material part in the successful propagandism and defence of Christianity in the period; and it is historically demonstrable that it *cannot* have taken any material part in the great campaign as apprehended by the generality of Christians in the period. The references, further, can, consistently with the supposition of truthful sincerity on the part of those who make them, be accounted for without supposing that so much as one veritable miracle was ever done in attestation of Christianity after the death of the Apostle John:—by supposing, either that the things referred to were not really miraculous in their nature, or that the reference to them is in some way mistaken as to the fact of their occurrence.

For instance, works of healing and exorcism, which are the most prominent in those few references, may have been real works, of healing the body and delivering the mind from evil spiritual influence, without being really miraculous,—that is, without being works of strictly “*extraordinary* providence.” Again, as to a reference by Irenæus to raising the dead. This is by Gibbon magnified into proof that continuance and not unfrequent performance of that unquestionable miracle was generally believed in by the second century Christians. But in fact it can be shown that they had no such prevalent belief; and the Irenæan reference does not even seem to imply that they had. It does not even imply that Irenæus himself had such a belief: but the contrary. He probably is reproducing, in a loose, unguarded way, previous references (*e.g.*, by Quadratus and by Papias) in which the miracle of raising the dead is really assigned, not to “the Church” at the time of this writing, but—presumably or expressly—to Christ or to the apostolic age.<sup>2</sup> Irenæus, speaking of raising the dead in the terms of a

<sup>1</sup> This subject is handled at length in *The Apology of the Christian Religion*, Book i.

<sup>2</sup> Of the two ante-Irenæan references extant, one (by Papias) is re-

preceding writer, without the strictness represented by our quotation marks, may not have observed that the expression, "our own times," was no longer strictly accurate as it might be when first employed; and he might be careless in his employment of the expression, as it did not really touch the point of his statement at this place.

Relatively to the question (of historical apologetics), what resources of evidence were available accessible to the Church of that period, we further observe as to "ecclesiastical" miracles,—1. That in the Church's judgment *they were not needed* for proof of Christianity by external evidence; seeing that for this purpose she had the evidence of new creation in her own life, that of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, and that of the miracles of Christ and His apostles,—whose historical reality was matter of fresh recent memory easy to demonstrate, and was not disputed by either Jews or heathens, but rather was attested by both;<sup>1</sup>—2. according to the few extant patristic references to the subject, the ecclesiastical miracles were not, like those of Christ and the apostles, employed by a particular teacher as credentials of his mission or in attestation of his message, but were produced, vaguely, in or by the community on behalf of the religion; and,—3. the alleged works, on the face of them not necessarily miraculous in the strict sense, were not, like the "minor works" in the Gospels and the apostolic history, *accompanied* by "greater" works, whose unquestionable miraculousness is a voucher for the veritable miraculousness of the "minor" works,—which as it were take rank from them, following in their train. Further,—

The Old Testament, with its evidence of miraculous working as well as of wonders of wisdom, was, much more than in later periods, *the Bible* in actual use of those early Christians, and for apologetic purposes might be employed by the commonalty of ordinarily intelligent Christians as it is employed

sumably to Paul's raising Eutychus (Acts xx.), and the other (by Quadratus) is expressly to miracles of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> The Jews bore witness to their reality by ascribing them to Satan; as also did Celsus, the only heathen adversary known to have gone straight into the subject, by ascribing them to magic. The *competitive* miracles ascribed to Apollonius of Tyanea are a *proof* that the heathen believed in the reality of miracles of Christ.

by Justin and Tertullian in their controversy with unbelieving Jews. The New Testament evidence of miracles could be employed in conversation (1 Pet. iii. 15) by the simplest Christian as it had been by the Jerusalem blind man, and (John vii. 31) by the Jewish commonalty. The *new Scriptures* may have been little in the hands of individuals,—that is, while yet the living voices of the apostles and their evangelist associates were in fresh memory of the Church. At the middle of the second century (*teste* Justin Martyr), Gospels were publicly read in the congregational worship of the Christians;<sup>1</sup> and they can be shown to have been in use of close study even among heretics more than twenty years before that. The collection of Paul's Epistles were, along with the (Pauline) Gospel of Luke, employed as the foundation of a notable heretical system as early as A.D. 140; and the genuineness of his "unquestionable" *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, and *Galatians*, can never have been really doubted. The recent "critical" assault has led to a fresh demonstration of the fact,<sup>2</sup> that the New Testament Scriptures now on our canon were held as apostolical in the bosom of the Christian community long before the close of the second century; while it can be historically demonstrated that they existed in the first century;—so that they must have been available as vouchers in case of need (cp. the reference to their existence in *Aristides*, circa A.D. 130) from the outset. But,—

Further, though no apostolic Scripture had existed, the substantive facts of first century Christian history would have been within reach of knowledge in the second, through authentic historical tradition, oral and written. While yet the apostolic voices were fresh in living memory, so of course were those facts; which had been in historical reality and in spoken discourse (Luke i. 2; 1 John i. 3) before they came to be on written record; while the facts once received into the mind of believers would (cp. Acts xx. 35), in their memory if not under their hand, be transmitted to children

<sup>1</sup> That they were our existing *four*, is demonstrated afresh by the recent discovery of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian, his pupil—a sort of "harmony" of the four, for use in Syrian churches.

<sup>2</sup> See proof of the New Testament canon in the present writer's work, *The Revelation and the Record*.

and to children's children. As regards materials and grounds of historical reasoning about the truth of Christianity, *the second century Church was thus placed in effect as if she, and even* (cp. Acts ii. 22) *the heathens addressed by her apologetics, had been personally present at the occurrence of the first century events.*<sup>1</sup>

Our present-day question about "authenticity of gospel history" thus had no such place in her apologetics as it has in ours. For in her day there could be no real doubt as to the substantive facts of the career of Christ and of the apostles. Heathen Celsus, while disputing the supernatural truth of Christianity, could believe in the historical reality of the facts of our Gospels, as an unbelieving Jew, Trypho, could believe in the divinity of the Old Testament. So far, the question of apologetics would be simply (John iii. 1, 2, iv. 29, ix. 25-33),—supposing the historical reality of those facts, does it not follow that this religion is true (John xx. 31)? or is it possible that it should be a "deceiver" (Matt. xxvii. 63)? Complication of the issue through wool-gathering of mythical hypothesis<sup>2</sup> was not wanting at even an earlier period than that (2 Pet. i. 16; 1 Tim. i. 4, iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 4; Tit. i. 14—in all which places the Greek for "fable" is *mythos*). There thus was for the early-primitive time, as there is for our time, a testing of "soundness," which in this relation is *sanity* of judgment (lit. "healthiness"). And if in some respects they had an advantage of position at the early time which we now have not, on the other hand, we have advantages which they had not,—*e.g.*, in our possessing the benefit of their *historical* testimony regarding matters of fact in the first century, to which their second century life was immediately adjacent in both place and time.<sup>3</sup>

Here comes into view a definite value of "the *testimony of the Church*"<sup>4</sup> of that period, with reference not only to

<sup>1</sup> Cp. above, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> =guess-work.

<sup>3</sup> *N.B.*—The New Testament Scriptures are a *second century testimony* regarding those matters; for unquestionably the second century Christians believed these Scriptures.

<sup>4</sup> *Confession of Faith*, chap. i. sec. 5; see below, p. 175. That is, her *witness-bearing* as to matter of fact within her knowledge; not, *authority* in dogmatising as to matters of doctrinal faith—which makes Romanism *versus* Protestantism. Augustine, when he says, "I would not have



matters of fact in the preceding period, but also and consequently (cp. John iv. 42) to *the truth of Christianity*, the *divinity* of this religion. In a question of moral evidence, the verdict of a jury is important presumptive evidence for history thenceforward. The primitive Christians are for later ages a jury giving judgment in a great case; a judgment which is only corroborated by the oppositions in their time, by reason of the moral quality of the oppositions (1 John iii. 13). And (cp. 1 Pet. i. 7 and iv. 12) the presumptive evidence constituted by their verdict (Mark xiii. 9) has a uniqueness in respect of *their* having, through their contiguity to the theatre of events in place and time, had, so to speak, in our world's history, *the first look* into the great case ("precognition").

The case was then tried as by fire, while their worldly interests and prepossessions were opposed to this new religion, and the facts regarding its historical origination were easily ascertainable. The facts were ascertainable to a Celsus, who reasoned from the Christian Scriptures against Christianity, as easily as to his contemporary philosopher Athenagoras, whose conversion to this religion has been ascribed to his study of those records for the purpose of writing against it (2 Pet. ii. 12). In such a question of moral evidence, the turning of the scale of judgment on either side would depend (see Luke viii. 15; John v. 39-41, vii. 17; Ps. cxii. 4) on a man's being or not being *morally earnest*, in *wishing to know truth*, in the matter. The persecutors had not this earnestness. The simple fact,<sup>1</sup> that in the trial of Christianity its apology was not listened to by the world which condemned it, is proof of *that* (John iii. 20)—proof corroborated by what is known otherwise regarding the world's moral condition (1 John v. 19; Rom. i. 18-32; Eph. iv. 18, 19). The Christian sincerity, as most terribly tested and attested, was known to the apologists, and (2 Cor. iii. 2) could be known and read of all men whom they addressed. But in appealing to this *they*

believed the gospel if I had not been persuaded thereto by the authority of the Church," may refer to the *gospel history* (evangelium) and *the evidence* for its authenticity that is constituted by the Church's having always held it as apostolic (also see John iv. 39-42).

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 152-155.

(John viii. 13) might be under a certain disadvantage as "bearing record of themselves." And for us, on the other hand, that historical testimony has in fulness the uniqueness of its value, that rises out of the solitary-exceptional character, in human history, of the situation of the witnesses and manner of their witness-bearing.

### SEC. 3. *Retrospect of the Period.*

In the region of the present writing, from the Tasman glacier of Mount Cook, there breaks out a milk-white stream, which gives its colour to the lake—Pukaki—it goes to form. And flowing out from this lake in the river Pukaki, it imparts that colouring to the Great Waitaki river, which retains a tinge of it all down to the sea. Our Pukaki lake shall now be the second century of Christianity. Corresponding to the river, which thence becomes contributory to the great arterial stream, is, in our historical region, the remaining part of the period of the persecutions, from the close of the second century down to Constantine's accession, A.D. 312. The second century Christianity not only entered into that remaining part of the early-primitive period, but has remained as a colouring in the great stream of the Christian thought of all the generations following. And, while the dogmatic instruction descending from the second century is represented by *The Apostles' Creed*, the visibly *distinctive* contribution of that century to the life of mankind as affected by its Christian thought is represented by the Christian words "apology," "apologetic."

It does not follow that the second century apologists are our masters, or even our models, in apologetics. It is not the Pukaki that rules in the Great Waitaki river; and Professor Huxley knows, as "a scientist," that Marathon spears and Bannockburn battle-axes and broadswords are not meet "weapons of precision" for the warfare of our new times. But where, as here, the warfare is distinctively spiritual, there the weapons, *e.g.* those of Socratic dialectic and of Aristotelian deduction—not to say of Platonising speculation—are perhaps not so "ready to pass away" as a juvenile "scientist" might think. In any case, the religion of our day, in remembering the days of old (Ps. cxlv. 3), may experience a something of

desirable rekindling, as when "in our ashes glow their wonted fires."

Besides, though (*Pascal*) we are the true ancients, a survival of all past generations, and consequently ought (Ps. cxix. 100) to "understand more than" their thus antiquated "ancients," still there *may* be matters in which they are our masters;—as, *e.g.*, "new-born babes" perhaps are the best judges of "sincere milk" (1 Pet. ii. 1, 2). For instance, as only the Pukaki lake itself can show the colouring it now derives from glacier fountain-head, so it is only on the glowing page of Herodotean "Muses" that Thermopylæ and Marathon can now be truly seen by us; and Peter, James, and John may conceivably be instructive to us regarding what in fact occurred in their sight and hearing—not in ours (2 Pet. i. 16–18). There thus may be some hope for the Pentateuch, now so deep in the black books of "higher criticism." Not to speak of long-buried Egypt's and Babylon's testimonies from underground, those who are not in bondage or captivity of bookishness, but live and think in the free open air, may see that writings of the Mosaic age are most likely to have come to form this vividly fresh living Pentateuchal panorama, even of primeval patriarchy, and still more, of yesterday's and this day's Israelitish experience, of Egyptian oppression and deliverance, and of Sinaitic consecration and outfitting with originative law. And so forth. Of the second century witnesses we do not require even that they should know themselves; yea, nor even that they should conscientiously *show* themselves: as indeed they are not thinking of self-exhibition in those fiery trials, any more than the Spartan three hundred were posing for *our* admiration when the clouds of Persian arrows darkened the sun. But we can see them.

Near the opening of the period, the Bithynian persecution (A.D. 110), following upon the Neronian persecution in the middle-apostolic age, is monumental of the fact, that the *sincerity* of the Christian belief was tested with the utmost conceivable severity (see Job v. 26, 27). And in the light of the two great flame-pillars of testimony, thus erected at the opening of the long war of the persecutions, we see that the burden of witnessing by suffering must have lain with a peculiar dreadfulness of pressure on Christians of the humblest

ranks (1 Cor. i. 26, 27), from which at the outset the witnesses of Christ were all but exclusively called. In those two earliest great persecutions there is among the Christian confessors no appearance of *leadership* to hold them to their post of witness-bearing, to nerve them for martyrdom, and sustain them in its horrors and infamous pains:—no allusion to an apostle as their fellow-sufferer at Rome, nor (cp. 1 Pet. v. 1) even to so much in Bithynia as a ruling elder to lead them on (i. 3) to victory through dying in the “lively hope” of resurrection to “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.”

We saw that at a later time, when “philosophers” and other such individuals came to the front, these may, through their class feelings and *cultured* sensibilities, have experienced pains of martyrdom or of confession of which lowlier sufferers might be not susceptible. But the lowlier sufferers must have drunk to the dregs the cup of *the worst* evils it is possible for creatures to inflict. Some of those evils, which now cannot be spoken of among Christians, it may be well to think about, in order so to be reminded *what*, in that age, human beings, male and female, “of like passions with us,” have undergone unshrinkingly for the faith of Christ.

The *endurance*, victoriously, of so terrible a trial, so varied and so long protracted, by men and women in such multitudes (cp. Heb. xii. 1), who had nothing to lean upon but the word of Christ, was in that period, and is for all ages, a strong presumptive proof of the divinity of the religion, in which they so “endured as seeing Him who is invisible.” And apart from this, *the sincerity*, so searchingly tested by that fire, is a guarantee of *their truthfulness as witnesses* regarding—what concerns the proof of Christianity—main plain memorable facts of then recent history of the religion in its primeval foundation movement.

When (Acts viii. 4) those who were scattered abroad by the persecution of the time of the first martyrdom “went everywhere preaching the word,”<sup>1</sup> presumably their preaching was largely in the form of way-side—or fire-side—conversa-

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word here is not (*kērugma*) the customary one for “preaching” (= “heraldry”), but one that means *bearing the good news* (evangel) of the word,—as if *talking* the good news.



tion. And in the more sustained propagandism, through which (Dan. iv. 10, etc.) the original banian tree extended into a tree-forest, which yet remained one tree, a very large part of the detailed work of the world's evangelisation may have been done through quiet diligence (Rev. xxii. 17), on way-sides and in households, of individual believers "teaching every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord" (cp. John i. 41, etc., iv. 39). In such work, where there could be no production of miracles, and there might be little opportunity—perhaps little capacity—for logical proof of the religion, much would depend on the seen and felt *truthfulness* of the believer simply as a witness. We may suppose that, as a rule, really earnest inquirers would feel no doubt of the sincere sincerity of a Christian from whom they asked a reason of the hope that was in him. On the other hand, their own conscious truthfulness, in inward assurance of the divinely saving efficacy of what they witnessed for, was to the humblest and simplest believers really a resource of available apologetic evidence. And an undertone of conscious truth, and of confidence in expecting success as to the truth of God, is all through the period found pervading the express and formal apologies that come into existence, such as to be itself a secondary or a constructive apologetic.

That the Christians of that period had among them a really authentic knowledge of the main plain facts of gospel history and of apostolic history, is matter of course on the view that our New Testament Scriptures are an authentic record of that history; while also it may be inferred from their having so steadfastly and resolutely *believed* in God (1 Pet. i. 21) as having come to them through Christ in a real historical revelation (2 Pet. i. 16). And that they had ample facilities for attaining to such knowledge, the ground of an historical faith in "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ," may appear from a consideration of the manner in which, after the apostolic age, they were placed on the face of the world and among its populations.

Recalling to mind the banian tree-forest as an image of the spreading of Christianity into occupation of the world it blessed (Gal. iii. 8), we now, with reference to fitness of organisation for collecting and diffusing knowledge, observe

that the tree, manifold in one, was, collectively and distributively, a whole of organic sensibility, as of one indivisible Christian mind of the Church (1 Tim. ii. 15), widespread as a world-embracing net of soul. Thus, for instance, A.D. 177, in Lyons and Vienne, at the western extremity of the then Christendom as visible in history, that Christian mind is seen in living communication, by means of a letter from the churches regarding their fiery trial through persecution, with the Christian brethren<sup>1</sup> in far-eastern Asia and Phrygia. The eastern *Galatians* (1 Pet. i. 1; cp. 2 Tim. iv. 10) may have early taken an interested part in sending the gospel to kindred Celts in the western mother-country (*Gaul*): where Irenæus, from Smyrna, in their neighbourhood, will have "swarms" of missionaries at work after A.D. 177. But among the sufferers in the persecution are Greek-speaking natives of their Asia Minor: one of whom, perhaps, was the martyr bishop Pothinus, over ninety years of age,—so that he may in childhood have listened to John the Apostle.<sup>2</sup> And his successor Irenæus, the supposed writer of the famous letter, who must have spent his prime of manhood in the western Celtic mission, had in his youth been a hearer of Polycarp of Smyrna, the Apostle John's contemporary for at least thirty years, and formed under him as his personal "follower" ("the angel" at Rev. ii. 8 might be this very Polycarp, destined—*mart.* A.D. 155—to be the most important Christian in the world down to the close of the half-century after John's departure from it).

1. Let us for illustration concentrate our attention on some one *sample matter of fact* with reference to the primeval century—*e.g.*, the apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse. We saw<sup>3</sup> that, of three extant external proofs of its genuineness

<sup>1</sup> These brethren are addressed as "the pilgrims" in those regions (1 Pet. i. 1, ii. 11; Heb. xii. 13). The Greek for which word—*paroikos*—has in our *parishioner* a meaning ("Bumbledom") the extreme opposite of that *unsettlement*, which was the intended sense in the primeval and early-primitive periods. The original *feeling*, as of those who "*seek* a country," is perceptible in the writing at Lyons and Vienne, A.D. 177.

<sup>2</sup> Regarding whom it was a tradition that, in his feebleness of extreme old age at Ephesus (in "Asia"), unable to discourse at length, he would only say, "Little children, love one another."

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 15, footnote.

in second century literature, in the form of quotations, one is found in Irenæus *On Heresies*, and one in the Lyonnese *Letter*. But now, on reflection, we perceive that through such "apostolic men" as Polycarp and (perhaps) Pothinus, Irenæus and his old Celtic churches must have been fully well informed about everything of real abiding importance regarding apostolic Scriptures, and especially regarding Scriptures connected with John. And every such thing in the knowledge of Christians at any one important centre, or of one active leading Christian in the world, was in that, as it were, world-embracing net-work of organic sensibility, almost without process in possession of the whole Church all over the earth. But the fact, *e.g.*, as to the Apocalypse would be known directly, from "hearers" of apostles, to Christians in many other places, where—as in Gaul—Christianity had been founded by "apostolic men" or their pupils; while the knowledge thus in the first instance existing dispersedly might in many cases not leave evidence of its manner of reaching men that could reach the following ages, as here it happens to have done in the writings of Irenæus, his Celtic church, and Justin Martyr. *Though there had been no such now remaining trace of the way in which the knowledge reached them, the authorship of the Apocalypse would be none the less Johannine, and might be well known about among Christians at that time.*

If the extant external evidence constituted by "use"<sup>1</sup> of the Scripture in question be scanty, that may be through some accidental cause of non-appearance of evidence in the scantily surviving remains of second century Christian literature. Or, it may be by reason of the fact that the Apocalypse was little in "use" of early Christian teachers,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Use" of a Scripture (see below, p. 175) by a second century father is set down by Eusebius as a mark of its genuine apostolicity. Bishop Lightfoot (*Essays on Supernatural Religion*) has made a contribution of real value to apologetics in his illustration of the fact that Eusebius, in his collection of proofs of "use," refers only to the case of Scriptures about which there was some haze or doubt.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, in what he says about the Apocalypse, shows two faces: one, of a disposition to question the genuine apostolicity of the book, which is in keeping with his heart of real dislike to it; the other, of recognition of that apostolicity, presumably representing his judgment, based on what he historically knows regarding second century "use" of the book.

*e.g.*, on account of an apprehended tendency of "use" of it to encourage undesirable chiliastic fancies in the popular mind; while it was not—like the *Gospels*, *Acts*, and greater *Epistles*, particularly the Pauline—publicly read in congregational worship.

2. Let us now fix our attention on *the vital continuity* of that common Christian consciousness of the whole period, as it were like a Nile river the same all down through Egypt land. That is illustrated vividly by the one case of Irenæus, who survived into the third century (about A.D. 203), while Polycarp, his master, had grown into full maturity of manhood under instruction of apostles, hearing from their living lips (Luke i. 2) what they had "seen and heard" of the Word of life (John xiv. 25, 26, xv. 26, 27, xx. 30, 31; 1 John i. 1-3). There thus is, in the chain of living tradition, only one link—Polycarp's life—between the apostolic "eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word from the beginning" and that opening of the third century, where matters of fact as to the primeval history of Christianity have taken their place in general history,—the place which they will hold through all the centuries following.<sup>1</sup> But there may have been many such cases, perhaps not quite so striking, regarding which there does not happen to be extant historical evidence. Thus Pothinus at the time of John's death was older than Jesus conversing with the temple doctors; and Justin Martyr was born about that time (though he was not a Christian till he was known as a "philosopher"); while, of course, converts or pupils of these men, thus touching the first century, would live far down into the third. The net-work of sensitive intelligence thus reaches to all the *length* of second century Church life as well as to all its breadth; as the "one tabernacle" extended over all the length and breadth of the sanctuary where Jehovah dwelt among His people.

<sup>1</sup> As to this point, *N.B.* 1. Excepting at Acts xx. 35, there is not, outside of our four Gospels, one particle of biography of Jesus that is known to have existed at the close of the apostolic age.—2. Excepting two or three comparatively insignificant morsels, there is no extant information regarding the apostles and their work beyond what is furnished by the apostolic Scriptures on our canon.



3. In order to a *parting view of the situation in that period*, relatively to the vitally important matter, for apologetics, of attainable information in the second century regarding the first, we now will contemplate that sample case of Irenæus and Polycarp in its dual-unity of parts, respectively representing the whole period as seen from each of its extremities.

*At the close of the period* (say A.D. 175—A.D. 201) IRENÆUS.—His great work, *On Heresies*, is occupied, not with open heathenism, but with oppositions or evasions on the part of men professedly Christian. We otherwise know<sup>1</sup> that those heretics, more than a generation before the time of his writing, based their speculations on the apostolic Scriptures, which they more or less corrupted or mutilated<sup>2</sup> to suit their views. He is peculiarly valuable for our present purpose, because in him we can see what the apologists, addressing heathens, had little or no occasion to show,—*the place of the new Scriptures*, and of the apostolic testimony regarding facts of the primeval Christian history, *in the Church's own inward life of believing*. Another effect of his representation of the state of Christianity—which for that century Bishop Lightfoot reckoned the most important source of real knowledge—is to show that the Tübingen representation of primeval Christian belief, as having been a sort of Judaical Socinianism, is the opposite of true; that the statement<sup>3</sup> that the history of religion might be written without mention of Socinians, holds good with reference to those early “Ebionites” and “Nazarenes,” about whom antiquarians have to say so much, —*because there is so little that is really known about them*.

A central picture of the close of the period *in its fountain* at the opening of the period, is to be seen in a famous passage of a *Letter to Florinus*, by Irenæus himself, preserved in Eusebius.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> It is not in evidence that the Gnostics *forged* Scriptures. From the known case of Marcion it might be inferred rather, that they restricted their free-handling to mutilation and (?) interpolation.

<sup>3</sup> Fairbairn of Glasgow.

<sup>4</sup> *Ecclesiastical History*, v. 10: The passage (Wace's translation) is

Elsewhere Irenæus strongly professes to conform in his own teaching to such tradition (see Luke i. 2) of "the elders," manifestly regarding this as obligatory on a Christian teacher. His "elder" means, a worthy belonging to the primeval generation, though, as in the case of Polycarp or Pothinus, he should have survived far down into this present generation. His practice relatively to those "elders" resembles that of one of them, Papias (*circa* A.D. 125) toward the apostles, whom he calls "elders" (or "the elders"—cp. 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1), because they were the masters of the generation in which *he* was a pupil. Papias is said by Irenæus to have been—along with Polycarp—a personal follower of John. In his "expositions," on the basis of certain Scriptures ("oracles") connected with the Lord (Gospels?), he (he tells us) habitually consulted the memory of men who had heard the relative testimonies of apostles, *e.g.*, of Peter, etc. Papias thus exhibits in his own person that same subordination to apostles, as the ultimate authority, which Irenæus pictures in Polycarp.

In the picture, "the Scriptures" "in accordance with" which Polycarp related the things he had heard from apostles (cp. Acts ii. 22, x. 38) about the Lord and His miracles, might conceivably be the Old Testament—*e.g.*, Polycarp exhibiting in those things a fulfilment of Messianic prophecy. But it is more in keeping with the whole passage to regard the said "Scriptures" as Gospels (*N.B.* Papias "used" an unwritten gospel of memory at the first remove—as Paul once did, Acts xx. 35). Of Gospels—*Mark* and *Matthew*—we have some notices in extant fragments of Papias, Polycarp's contemporary from the apostolic age. And more generally there is, independently of this *Letter to Florinus*, extant proof of the apostolicity of the Scriptures now on our New Testament canon. What at this point we mark in the *Letter* is, the state of the Christian mind, at the

given in the present writer's work, *The Revelation and the Record*, p. 149:—where, however, by his fault there is wanting an important clause of the original, to the effect of exhibiting Polycarp's reminiscences of what he had heard from the mouth of men who had personally known Christ in the flesh, as referring not only in general to "the Lord," but to "His miracles" in particular.

earliest appearance of an apostolic tradition distinct from Scripture, relatively to *the sovereign authority* of Scripture, as the norm with which that tradition has to "accord," even when the tradition comes direct through a Polycarp from such apostles as John. (In this relation the *Letter* shows curiously "undesigned coincidence" with the fragments of Papias.)

At that early appearance the unwritten tradition, fresh from its living fountain in a personally remembered apostolic teaching, apparently may have satisfied the thirst of the Christian community for information regarding the facts of the primeval history: while as vouchers there could be the new Scriptures not yet gone widely into general use, and for authoritative determination as to *doctrinal principles* of the religion there also were available to them the Old Testament "Scriptures"—*i.e.* "the Scriptures" referred to by Paul at Rom. iii. 2; 2 Tim. iii. 15-17; and by Peter at 1 Pet. iv. 11; 2 Pet. i. 19-21,<sup>1</sup>—which at that time were *the Bible* in ordinary use among Christians, at least much more than they have been at any subsequent period. The habit of *naming the particular Scripture* that is referred to does not appear as established in practice previously to Irenæus himself: though it may have begun to be formed much earlier than the time of his writing,—as soon, *e.g.*, as heretical abuse of the new Scriptures created a feeling of need of guarded exactness in the handling of them: while a growing amount of use of them was (Ex. i. 6) necessitated by gradual disappearance of those "elders," who could relate the oral apostolic teaching at first or second hand. Irenæus has no catalogue of apostolic Scriptures; but from his "use" of them it can be seen that *his New Testament was substantially the same as ours.*

The conservative traditionalism which appears in him is essentially different from that later traditionalism, which makes faith dependent on "the Church."<sup>2</sup> The Irenæan traditionalism makes faith, and the Church as a community of believers, to repose on "the apostles and the prophets,

<sup>1</sup> The only writings that are named "the Scriptures" in the New Testament, though Paul's Epistles are placed along with them at 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 164.

Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 20). The emphasis laid by Irenæan traditionalism on the known mind of "the elders" has its very point and force of reason in the view, that these elders authentically convey to us the teaching of the apostles; while the sovereign authority which it assigns to *Scripture* as inspired of God<sup>1</sup> constitutes a conclusive test of the claim to represent that primitive traditionalism that is made by an ecclesiasticism which (Mark vii. 7) "teaches for doctrines the commandments of men." It can be demonstrated historically, that hitherto every traditional Church doctrine that is not found in *Scripture* is either a contradiction of *Scripture* teaching or a corruption of it.

If Irenæus and his teaching were simply effaced from history and memory, his views in substance would still be visible in the mind of the second century Church,—though not all-round in any one teacher as they are in him, the only second century Church-teacher from whom an all-round of views has reached us. The apologies, which mainly are the now extant writings of other second century Christian leaders, do not, on their armed front of battle in defence of the religion, show except partially and inferentially what are the detailed contents of the Church's faith: as one does not see the streets and homes of a besieged city from the outside of its embattled walls. Irenæus, writing, so to speak, at leisure, for the instruction of Christians,—including "reproof and correction" of heretics,—enables us to see as full-formed in his mind what in the apologists is perceptible only through isolated incidental indications. It really *is* the mind of the whole Church of his day; and its appearing *in him*, as it does, implies that it was the Church's mind, not yet fully unfolded in expression, *at the beginning* of the second century.<sup>2</sup>

*At the opening of the period* (A.D. 101—A.D. 155) POLYCARP.—Before Irenæus left his master's feet, *the heresies* about which he wrote his great work were under weigh,—as early, say (Basilides, Valentinus, Marcion), as A.D. 120—140. The word

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus held the strongest view of the divine inspiration of the apostolic Scriptures, as of the Old Testament Scriptures.

<sup>2</sup> See also APPENDIX, as to its relation at later times.



“heresy” is from a root that means, *seeking*, which in the connection is suggestive of a misleading egoism as the *moral* root of the thing (Acts xxiv. 14; 1 Cor. xi. 19:—at Gal. v. 20 it is placed, among “works of the flesh,” between “sedition” and “murder”). The Gnostic heresies (cp. Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20—where the Greek for “science”—*gnōsis* is= “knowingness,” “illuminationism”; cp. “scientist”), which became conspicuous in the second century, were—like Moham-  
medanism, Mormonism, New Zealand Hau-hauism—a confused amalgam of essential heathenism in worldly speculation with some Christian elements of thought. In history they arrest attention by their offensive strangeness: whence it may appear in the retrospect as if heresy had been at least a main outstanding feature of the Church’s experience in that old time. In reality it was rather as an appearance of meteoric lights, whose glaring has little to do with the real history of those hours in which the lawful rulers of the night are quietly shining. The second century “heresies,” conspicuous as if portentously filling the whole world, thus remind us of the monstrosities of seventeenth century opinion described in Edwards’ *Gangræna* or in Baillie’s *Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time*: things which had no real resemblance to the inward course of ordinary Christian British thought—as appearing, e.g., in James Melville’s *Autobiography* or in the *Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson* by Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, his widow. Relatively to the real life of the period, those “heresies” were only as the turgid discoloration of a river in flood or as the storm-clouds of a spring. They may—cp. diseases of infancy—have served to purge the Church’s infant mind of some “parlous stuff.” But her veritable Christian life, of thought as well as action, is seen in such a case as that of Polycarp.

The *heresies* which occupy the great work of his pupil do not represent the mind of what it describes as “the Catholic Church.” On the contrary—cp. the “deistical writers” in Leland’s *Review* of them—the very reason of their being in this book is, that they are alien to that mind (1 John ii. 19). While it might appear as if all Christendom were full of such monstrosities of opinion, on consideration the real Christian mind of the period is seen to be quietly settled in the belief

represented by *The Apostles' Creed*.<sup>1</sup> This we see most clearly in the comparatively quiet first half of the century, opening on our view in the apostolic fathers, of whom Polycarp is for our purpose the best typical sample.

His contemporary Papias is directly known to us only through some fragments of his writing, transcribed, two centuries after his time, by Eusebius, who, at one place, making use of what was eulogised as his great erudition, describes him as a man of very little sense—*nous* (he differed from Eusebius and other Church leaders about the millennium). But the fragments are well worth preserving, even in a great ecclesiastical history. In them we see (at Hierapolis in Asia Minor; cp. 1 Pet. i. 1), within some twenty or thirty years after John's death, a Christian minister habitually instructing his people through "expositions" on the basis of a Scripture that refers to the earthly ministry of Christ (The Gospel History?). One of the fragments, regarding the authorship of *Mark* and *Matthew*, is in comparison with the history preserving it as a nugget of gold compared with its quartz matrix or diluvium bed. And for us a morsel of information incidentally thus appearing is peculiarly important as constituting a vividly corroborative illustration of what we saw regarding Polycarp in the letter of Irenæus, written more than a generation after A.D. 125 (where Papias is placed).

At this early date, Papias, who in his expository studies prefers to consult men rather than books, is, with reference to points in connection with the earthly ministry of Christ, in the habit of consulting the memory of men who have been personally "hearers" of the "elders." And (cp. 1 Pet. v. 1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1) of eight or nine "elders" whom he thus has occasion to name in one breath, all but one (Aristion) or two<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Regarding which, see p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> The one, Aristion, may, like Barnabas, on account of eminent service in connection with official apostles (Matt. xix. 28), have been spoken of as an "apostle" in the *general* sense of "emissary" (see Heb. iii. 1). An "elder" John, who is placed along with him in a supplementary (Papian) group of two, may be the apostle, named also in a group of seven "elders," all apostles (pre-Pauline). The group of two may mean two, belonging to the first generation, whom Papias had *personally* heard: while the main group of seven—all apostles—will be apostles whom some of his contemporaries have heard.

are (original) apostles! Here we see in the very process of formation that *traditional* heritage of apostolic testimony, which Irenæus will keep and guard so sacredly, "pure and entire," as a faithful minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God (see 2 Thess. iii. 6—all but the earliest of Paul's Epistles).

In so far speaking as "historical critic" about particular Scriptures—*Mark* and *Matthew*—Papias is solitary-exceptional among apostolic fathers known to us. With reference to a sentence found in our *Matthew*, *Barnabas*, "The Shepherd of Hermas," has the "it is written" which marks as holy Scripture. *Clement of Rome* (see Phil. iv. 3), writing to the Corinthians (*circa* A.D. 96?), reminds them of *Paul's* having written to them. Polycarp, writing to the Philippians (*circa* A.D. 108<sup>1</sup>) speaks of Paul's having written to *them*—in terms which place *apostolic* Scripture a whole world above the writings of such ordinary Christians as him (Polycarp). And in this, his only extant writing, he seems as if 1 Pet. i.-iv. had completely taken possession of him, so as not only to fill his mind but to form the warp and woof of its texture. He has the exact words of the wonderful 1 Pet. i. 8; and on the five octavo pages of his letter we find *eleven* distinct traces of 1 Peter.<sup>2</sup> Yet he does not once name it. Nor does Clement name *Hebrews*, though his letter is almost as full of it as Polycarp's is of 1 *Peter*.

Here we note these two things,—1. *No New Testament Scripture is named by any apostolic father*, excepting Papias in what he happens to say about the composing of *Matthew* and *Mark*; while,—2. *No apostolic father has any appearance of knowledge of matters of primeval Christian history beyond what is recorded in our existing New Testament.*<sup>3</sup> This of course discloses a powerful corroboration of other evidence of primeval origination of those Scriptures. But the present suggestion is, that the Christians who survived the apostles,

<sup>1</sup> This date is fixed by a reference he makes to Ignatius, as having quite recently gone westward, on his way to martyrdom at Rome: a martyrdom which took place A.D. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Smyrna was in "Asia," one of the regions to which 1 *Peter* is addressed (i. 1).

<sup>3</sup> This name, of "Testament" (Tert.), does not appear in use until about the close of the second century.

while possessing the new Scriptures (having them as vouchers),<sup>1</sup> did not, in their instructions to the new generation under their charge, ordinarily make formal reference to those writings, but drew upon the fresh living memory of the apostolic teaching. The "as it is written" of Barnabas, like "the Scripture saith" at 1 Tim. v. 18 (referring to Luke x. 7 ?), may thus be only "one swallow" that "does not make a summer" (yet shows that there *is* a summer—on the wing to come). Polycarp's public career extends over the whole transition time to a "use" of Scripture like the present use,—*naming* the book and the author that is quoted or referred to (though not giving "chapter and verse").

The *intellectual* character of these apostolic fathers thus comes to be important for our inquiry, as affecting their qualification—not for "higher criticism," but—for safe *transmission of an heritage* of apostolic testimony, orally delivered while it lived in memory of men who had heard it from apostles' lips, but guarded for the following generations through having from the outset been placed on record of apostolic Scriptures. And at first sight the aspect of that intellectual character is far from imposing. "The Shepherd of Hermas," for instance, is a rhapsody, from which we are unable to judge what might be the author's mental qualifications in his normal exercise of reason on plain matter of history or doctrine. So too of *Ignatius*. He has flashes of theological insight not equalled by any other father of his period. But his *Letters*—even the "genuine ones"—are known to have been extensively interpolated in a class ecclesiastical interest. And, as far as can be judged from such documents, when writing them—on his way to martyrdom—he was in a mental condition of abnormal exaltedness (*tête montée* ?) which places it out of our power to divine what might be the value of an opinion of his regarding plain matters (in which—cp. Cromwell—he may have been the shrewdest of mankind). But in other cases we have samples of the ordinary mental condition of Christians of that time. *Papias*, for instance, though he should be simple as Eusebius deems him, is an excellent witness, were it only by reason of his candid simplicity, his open-eyed industriousness, and his

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 175.



manifest predilection for plain downright fact as to the great matters. And in the *Letter to Diognetus* there is disclosed on the writer's part, not a fanatical excitability open to gross delusions, but a meditative calmness of clear soul, such as later Christians had in view when they spoke of their religion as a "philosophy," meaning a *contemplative* life. But undoubtedly, for our purpose the typically representative apostolic fathers are the remaining two,—*Polycarp* in the first place, and in a lower degree the Roman *Clement* (the *Alexandrian* Clement flourished *circa* A.D. 200).

Clement, if, as is not unlikely he be the Clement (Phil. iv. 3) "whose name is in the Book of Life," may, still in a vigorous old age, after having served in Paul's European campaigning, have, at the funeral of the Apostle John, met Polycarp, John's follower, who then, at least full thirty years of age<sup>1</sup> (cp. Luke iii. 23 ; Num. iv. 3, etc.), was perhaps already known as (Rev. ii. 8) "the angel" of the church at Smyrna.<sup>2</sup> While Clement at Rome held high place in the western church, writing as if patriarchally to the (still) unruly Corinthians (cp. 1 Cor. i. 11, etc.), Polycarp, through the fifty years after his writing to Paul's noble Philippians, seems a very pillar of quietly radiant influence for good in the eastern church.<sup>3</sup> In mental character, relatively to qualification for safe transmission of an apostolic heritage of doctrines or of Scriptures, the two men were of a type which may be delineated as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> The "eighty and six years" at his martyrdom—the duration of his serving Christ—may refer back, not to his birth, but to his first *personal* profession of Christianity : so that at the date of the apocalyptic writing he *might* be of full age. *N.B.* his *importance very early* in the second century.

<sup>2</sup> Clement's letter (the genuine one), which was written in the name of Domitian (*ob.* A.D. 96), is placed as the oldest extant non-apostolic Christian writing (he thus is *not* placed as a Mark or a Luke). Polycarp, young as he must have been at the time of the writing of Rev. ii. 8–10, might nevertheless conceivably be the "angel" there. In the apostolic age men—*e.g.* Timothy—were placed young in situations of highest trust, as there were young generals in the first French revolutionary wars. How old was the Apostle John at the great Pentecost, when he was consecrated ambassador to "all nations" ?

<sup>3</sup> In extreme old age (A.D. 150) he made a journey to Rome for a purpose of mediation between east and west ; and, though unsuccessful in his mission, was duly honoured in his person.

Without exceptional intellectual ability, they had in them what was much more important as qualification for that vitally important office, of transmitting the great heritage. Thus,—1. They personally love and reverence the new Scriptures. Polycarp's letter is full of one of them, and Clement's of another; and both writers take occasion to do homage to particular Scriptures that are specially related to churches they are respectively addressing.—2. They are in the spirit of the Scriptures, of zeal without fanatical discolouring exaggeration,—of wisdom and power and a sound mind,—as if under baptismal influence of that *inimitable* authoritative tender sanctity which constitutes what is known to critics as "the scriptural style."—3. While only one of them (Polycarp: mart. A.D. 155) is certainly *known* to have died for the faith, they both have quietly on their own spirit a fire-edge of that moral earnestness, which (1 Pet. i. 7; Heb. xii. 1) when tried (Jas. i. 12) shows the true temper of preparedness for confession and for martyrdom.<sup>1</sup> And,—4. more directly to our present purpose, while taking an active personal interest in the Christian well-doing and well-being of churches far beyond their own immediate charges and spheres of labour, they were gifted with a regulative solid strength of judgment as men of affairs,—such that, *e.g.*, they were trusted and deferred to by those distant churches, as well as most influential in the communities where they were personally known.

It is well to mark those qualities in these two representative leaders, who so stand as—Jachin and Boaz pillars—respectively in the east and in the west, on the two sides of the gate of entrance into the second century from the apostolic age. There is no reasonable doubt that they represent in history the class of Christians who came to be trusted as leaders, and imitated as examples, in their day and generation,—supported in localities by local men like "the elders" of Jerusalem Synod (Acts xv.). In that world's great crisis of "fiery trial" for all time, so terribly searching relatively to—the real *desideratum* for the crisis—moral earnestness on the part of professing Christians, the Church no doubt possessed, in her membership over all, a just proportion of the *steadiness* (1 Pet. v. 10–12; cp. Luke xxii. 32) which appears conspicuously in these two foremost leaders:—a distinctively *balanced* quiet

<sup>1</sup> In Polycarp's prayer on occasion of his martyrdom, he offered himself as a sacrifice to God (cp. Phil. ii. 17). But (Rom. xii. 1) he did so all through the "eighty and six years" of his serving Christ.

force of judgment, in matters of faith and practice, such as in our time is exemplified in men like the late Dr. Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury, without the transcendent ability that shone in his predecessors Anselm and Bradwardin. In these two faithful witnesses we see a meet first appearance of that one and indivisible sensitive intelligence, which pervaded the whole Church life of that second century as the soul fills and rules the body, "all in the whole, and all in every part." From the outset it put success in such mean imposture as mere forgery, creating a false unhistorical Christianity, quite out of the question—except (now) in the imagination of theorising visionaries presumably incapable of moral reasoning (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4).

Our direct and primary interest here lies—we now repeat—only in ascertaining what it was that in fact the primitive Christians believed as to defence of religion. But—we repeat also—the *fact of their so believing* the Christian doctrine of revelation and redemption, as a thing to be maintained at all hazards and costs, is on the face of it a presumptive proof of the divinity of this religion. And they are not only thus evidential monuments, monumental evidences, but also faithful witnesses. Their *judgment* regarding matters of opinion—*e.g.* that certain second century works were veritably miraculous proofs of the religion—may be no more an authority for us than the judgment of Celsus, that "the works of Christ" were feats of magic learned in Egypt. Yet regarding matters of historical fact—which for us can be materials or grounds of a judgment of our own, and regarding which they are competent witnesses—their *testimony*, as borne in professedly believing this religion, is of real weight in the greatest of all trials: were it only because, while their truthful sincerity as witnesses was most terribly and searchingly tested and proved, and their intelligence was quite adequate, in relation to the matters in question, for their "knowing what they said and whereof they affirmed,"—they were within easy reach of authentic knowledge of those matters almost at first hand.

When Sir Walter Scott wrote *Waverley*, "Charlie's Year"—'Tis *Sixty Years Since*—was in living memory of men who had personally witnessed its memorably thrilling in-

cidents of war and trials. The second century Christians, similarly contiguous to the primeval Christianity, were at the same time a *jury*—the *only* jury—that have heard the first century Christianity itself speaking about its few and simple great matters through a generation of its personal witnesses. The quality of at once witnesses and jurymen is exemplified in such individuals as Clement of Rome and Polycarp of Smyrna.

## CHAP. II. THE MODERN PERIOD OF APOLOGETICS.

The period so described may be regarded as extending from the close of the sixteenth century to our day. The apologetics in it has been occasioned by a negativism or scepticism, relatively to the Christian religion and its records, which has arisen within the visible Christendom itself, where the primitive apologetics had heathen religions and philosophies as opponents. It thus cannot be rightly apprehended apart from the positive or dogmatic faith of the early Reformation period—sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—from which it was a recoil, or against which it was a revolt (1 John ii. 19).

### SEC. 1. *Regarding the early Reformation and preceding “Ages of Faith.”*

*The Reformation dogmatic faith* resumed, in common with the Romish creed, the primitive catholic doctrines of the primitive ecumenical councils regarding the constitution of the person of Christ and regarding Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead. In opposition to a prevalent Pelagianism of the mediæval Church, it laid great emphasis on the Augustinian doctrine of grace, regarding fallen man's moral corruption of nature, amounting to spiritual impotency, with the correlate fact of sovereignly efficacious grace of God as the cause of man's regeneration and conversion. But the distinctive Reformation point of doctrine was, justification by faith alone,—free pardon and acceptance, the gift of divine redeeming love, on the ground of God's own righteousness in Christ, or as the reward of Christ's meritorious obedience unto death for our sin;—to the exclusion of all thought of a



righteousness of man, or of any creature, as the meritorious cause of a sinner's pardon and acceptance. Along with that "material principle of the Reformation"—Luther's *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ* ("the point of a church's standing or falling")—there was embraced in the movement as "formal principle," the sole supremacy of Scripture as rule of Christian faith and practice,—as *the authority* for Christians regarding matters of religious truth and duty.

The "old dogmatism," of the early Reformation period, was itself a revolt against an older dogmatism, of a pharisaic traditionalism which, in germ appearing early in the primitive period of apologetics, went on unfolding through the later-primitive "age of the councils," and thereafter through the Middle Ages, until it reached maturity in that Romanism which was thrown off as an anti-Christian bondage by the peoples thenceforward known as Protestant. That older dogmatism differs from the old Protestant dogmatism in this, that the former ascribed *authority* in matters of religion to "the Church," where the latter made Scripture to be the alone authority. But they both alike founded on *authority*, of supernatural revelation of a supernatural redemption, as being the appropriate object or objective ground of Christian faith. And one mode of the opposition, against which the modern apologetics has had to contend for the faith, is a *Rationalism* which means or involves, to the extent of its operation, rejection of that authority.

"Variations" among Protestant churches (*Bossuet*), at the outset or eventually, need not exercise us here and now in connection with apologetics. It suffices for us to see among them ("*Harmony of the Protestant Confessions*," A.D. 1581), at the outset of Reformation Christianity, a general acceptance of the view, that in matters of religious faith and practice *the authority* is Scripture as the Word of God, the divine record of the divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> It has recently been suggested, that the divinity ascribed to Scripture in the

<sup>1</sup> The "Reformed" (Calvinistic) branch of the Reformation Church maintained, generally, that everything is unlawful in the Church that God has not prescribed in His word. The lower view, that things are lawful in the Church if He have not forbidden them, is not necessarily intended as a rationalistic rejection of the sole authority of revelation.

Reformation doctrine as to "formal principle" is compatible with some *unveracity*. In fact it meant, with clear consciousness, *infallibility* of Scripture, as contrasted with fallibility of popes, councils, "the Church." The Protestantism of the early Reformation period thus was as truly dogmatic as Romanism was: though Protestantism made "the Bible, the Bible alone" (*Chillingworth*) to be the authority, where Romanism ascribed authority to also popes, councils, "the Church." As opposed to rationalistic rejection of authority *ab extra*, the two systems are in one and the same relation to the movement of modern thought.

Let us now look back beyond that early Reformation time, to remoter fountains. The whole intermediate time between the two apologetic periods—primitive and modern—was dogmatic in the sense of unquestioning acceptance of supernatural revelation,—of its doctrines as represented, *e.g.*, by *The Apostles' Creed*, and of our existing canonical Scriptures of both Testaments as a divine record of the divine revelation. Here we speak broadly of the character of the Christian Middle Ages over all, which is what alone concerns us at present, in our endeavour to realise the modern position as a whole. As compared with the primitive period of oppositions from heathenism, and with our modern period of oppositions from within a Christendom, the long intermediate epoch was one of unquestioning acceptance of what has been thus opposed from without or from within: so that the Middle Ages were "ages of faith,"—though (*e.g.* in the Crusades) the weapons of contending for the faith might be carnal. Individual cases of rationalism, negativism, scepticism, atheism—mediaeval Servetism—do not affect the general accuracy of this representation: as the Emperor Julian's apostasy does not show that his Roman empire lapsed into heathenism at the death of Constantine the Great, and Spain is not shown to have ceased to be true "catholic" by the treason of another Julian.<sup>1</sup>

The dogmatising began in the later-primitive period—"age of the councils"—with great solemnity of world-imperial sanction, almost immediately after the downfall of

<sup>1</sup> See W. S. Lander's *Count Julian*.

heathen imperialism, when the empire became so far Christian (A.D. 312) through Constantine's accession to the throne (first Ecumenical Council, Nice, A.D. 325). On the part of the series of councils, representing mainly the eastern or Greek church, it had reference to the constitution of the Godhead and of the person of Christ. But, especially in the western church, there began with, in especial, Augustine, a movement of Christian thought with reference to salvation and to sin, which, extending all down through the Middle Ages, was resumed and completed in the Reformation doctrine of grace.<sup>1</sup> And all the thinking on the varied lines thus indicated was essentially dogmatic in the sense at present in question on our part,—namely, the sense of assuming and proceeding on the *authority* of supernatural revelation of God in Christ, and the *divinity of Scripture* as record of that revelation,—though until the Reformation time there was not a decisively distinct articulation of the point, “the Bible *alone*.”

At the very beginning of the dogmatising “age of the councils,” even in the court of the first Christian emperor, there began to appear, on the part of worldly-minded Christian leaders, a *Hellenism* (cp. Col. ii. 8) which—analogue to the “Humanism” of paganising coteries of classic scholars at the early Reformation time—was at heart more or less rationalistic, in the sense of explaining away the positive contents of revelation into natural elements or principles of knowledge: in other words, *naturalistic*, to the effect of displacing Christian doctrine with what was only a heathenish theosophy or naturalistic philosophy of religion. And there was a rationalistic (= naturalistic) element perceptibly operative (*e.g.* Abelard and Scotus Erigena) as an alloy in mediæval speculations that might be dogmatic in intention and in essential reality. But there was not, relatively to the authority and the substantive contents of Scripture, a negativism express and avowed, such as has appeared in the deistical or infidel theologising, perhaps of nominally Christian teachers, that has characterised the new scholasticism of our modern period.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> “But though German rationalism is thus in substance, and as to its fundamental principles, just old infidelity, there are two things about it

Thus in the Middle Ages there was no occasion for such apologetics of the Christian faith as in this modern period has come to load the book-shelves. There was not assault calling for such defence. A veritably apologetic work belonging to the Middle Ages—a curiosity—may on close inspection be seen to be (on behalf of Christianity and its Bible) *against Mohammedanism and the Koran*!<sup>1</sup> Bradwardin's great work (fourteenth century) in defence of religion is entitled *The Cause of God against Atheists*. But in the primitive period it was the *Christians* that were "atheists": witness Athenagoras clearing them of this along with other "calumnies."<sup>2</sup> And it appears from the sub-title that the "atheists," especially in Bradwardin's view, are "Pelagians" in their theorising about second causes. His work is really in defence of the Augustines which are new—first, that it is broached and defended by men who call themselves Christians, who profess to believe in some sense in Christ and revelation, and who hold the offices of ministers and professors of Christian theology. It is true that some of the English deists in the early part of last century did occasionally express some respect for Christianity, and make something like a profession of believing it. But besides that their conduct wanted the aggravation of their holding the offices of ministers and professors of Christian theology, the sort of profession they made of Christianity could scarcely be reckoned an act of dishonesty or hypocrisy, for it was not usually made in such a way as to indicate any wish or expectation that they should be believed; whereas, etc. . . .

"Another thing that is in a great measure new in German infidelity, though some approaches to it are to be found among the English deists, is, that their infidelity is all based upon and derived from the Bible itself. There is scarcely any one of their infidel positions for which they do not appeal to the authority of the Scriptures; and their gross perversions of the Word of God to the support of infidelity constitutes one of the greatest aggravations of the guilt which attaches to them."—Cunningham, pp. 251, 252 of the work referred to at p. 195, below.

Of those whom he thus refers to—anti-supernaturalists—he says at p. 249, they "are undoubtedly infidels, and ought ever to be regarded, spoken of, and treated as such. Their infidelity is aggravated by the grossest dishonesty and hypocrisy in pretending to be Christians and believers in revelation, and they would be entitled to rather more respect if they threw off the mask altogether. The foundations of German rationalism, or anti-supernaturalism as it is sometimes called, are, etc."—*N.B.* a curious coincidence with Strauss, below, p. 227.

<sup>1</sup> Two such works were republished, in a volume (extant at Oamaru) of tracts on Mohammedanism, with a commendatory preface by Martin Luther,—a sign of olden times.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Embassy* to Marcus Aurelius—see above.



tinian (now the Calvinistic) doctrine of sovereign grace, making God, in our salvation, to be "all in all." The work resembles Edwards' *On the Will* rather than Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe*. It presupposes revelation and the divinity of Scripture. What its title betokens is, near the close of the Middle Ages and their scholasticism, the complete ascendancy of *dogmatic* theologising.<sup>1</sup>

Near the beginning of that scholasticism (eleventh century), Anselm, Bradwardin's predecessor in the see of Canterbury, best remembered in connection with his epoch-making work on the Atonement,<sup>2</sup> further went into—"ontology"—the metaphysics of "theology" in the strict sense (= "doctrine regarding God") in a manner analogous to modern studies of "the *à priori* argument," and of high speculations of Augustine in, *e.g.*, *The City of God* and his controversy with Manichæism. So, too, at the culmination of the scholasticism (thirteenth century), did Thomas Aquinas, "the angel of the schools," *e.g.*, in a separate work of defence of religion, reckoned second only to Bradwardin's work on that defence in the Middle Ages. But these were not defences against assault of negativism or scepticism such as we now have in view. For instance, the endeavour in *The City of God*,—to show how it is rationally possible "to justify the ways of God to man," or, in other words, in the face of a mundane history so disastrously dark as ours is, still (Ps. xcvii. 2) to believe in a divine government of the world as declared in the Christian system,—that endeavour is<sup>3</sup> representative rather of the self-questionings of "fears within" the religion than of its defensive polemic against "wars without." And the mediæval speculation, ontological and otherwise, was, even when aberrant, still professedly within the limits of the supernatural revelation, and under law to its authority.

The dogmatic manner of thinking which characterised the

<sup>1</sup> "In this whole scholastic period down to the Reformation no controversies, public transactions and determinations of Synods, had place in the manner and with the far-reaching importance which had characterised them in the ancient church."—Landerer, in Herzog's *Real-Encycl.* Bund xiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Cur deus homo?* = "the end of Incarnation?"

<sup>3</sup> Cp. the book of Job and the *Theodicée* of Leibnitz—*versus* Bayle.

Reformation Christianity at the outset, was dominant through its early period, down through the sixteenth century into the seventeenth. The appearance of one or more apologetic works within that period would be only as the "one swallow" that does not "make a summer" (though it may be a stray sign that summer is nigh, as if on wing to come). If the mediæval Christian thinking, on the face of it all dogmatic as a cloistered scholasticism, nevertheless had in it a soul of speculation adventurous as a wandering Crusader, on the other hand, the Reformation movement of thought, at first sight speculative enterprising as a Columbus or a Vasco de Gama, proved to be not less thoroughly dogmatic than that pent-up mediævalism or its modern heir. Protestantism, a revolt *against* authority merely human, gave itself over completely *to* the authority, and contended earnestly and passionately, even unto death, *for* the authority of Scripture alone, or of God in Christ therein self-revealed as the Church's living prophet, priest, and king.

Even the *Socinians* at that early time<sup>1</sup> at least professed, like the primitive Gnostics, to found on Scripture: although in their case, as in that of the Gnostics, a rationalistic element, in forced and arbitrary construction of the Scriptures, was a necessity of their position in holding an essentially anti-scriptural creed.<sup>2</sup>

The "Humanism" of quasi pagan classicism, that appeared in the revival of learning, had no such place of influence in the Reformation movement as came to be held by the *Hellenism* of professedly Christian teachers in the church of the empire of Constantine the Great. For a century after the beginning of the Reformation, the ascendancy of a dogmatic faith was quite unbroken: controversies, abounding as they did, were only between one dogmatic system and another, all alike professing subjection to the sovereign authority of supernatural revelation of God, divinely recorded in Scripture. A philosophical speculation like that of Des Cartes, resulting from the intellectual awakening that had characterised the Reformation time, might occasion uneasiness, but would not affect the general

<sup>1</sup> *Racovian Catechism*—Ree's translation, with notes.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. the *Unitarian* "Revised Version" of the New Testament.

character of the period as dogmatic in its thought. The "Cartesian doubt" was not intentionally even a philosophical negativism or scepticism. It was only a provisional suspense of the judgment, with a view to rising from primary principles and elements of knowledge into coherent system. Its *cogito ergo sum* might be intended or construed as meaning only a primary judgment that *phenomenon* implies *noumenon* or substance quality. It might conceivably apply, as a regulative principle, to our believing apprehension of the materials of knowledge that are supernaturally given in scriptural revelation, as well as to our believing apprehension of the materials of knowledge that are given as a natural revelation in the two worlds of matter and of mind. And with reference to supernatural revelation and redemption, the modern doubt or disbelief (which Professor Huxley—in bad Greek—has named "Agnosticism"), which came into distinct visibility in the early English deism,<sup>1</sup> cannot with truth be said to have exercised a historically recognisable influence until the sixteenth century was drawing to a close,—after the definitive political success of the original Reformation movement had been signalised by the destruction of the Spanish Armada and sealed by the Spanish recognition of the Dutch Republic.

A wave of worldliness thereafter passed over the Protestant communities, as a wave of worldliness had passed over the Christianised Roman empire, when "the churches had rest." And that wave preceded or accompanied, and presumably occasioned (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; cp. Matt. vi. 19–24) the scepticism or disbelief relatively to the Scriptures (Hobbes, *Leviathan*), to Bible religion (Herbert), to supernaturalism generally (Spinoza, *Tractatus Theol. Pol. und Ethica*), which was represented by such masters as Bayle with French versatility, and Spinoza with Teutonic profundity, before making its most conspicuous appearance in the eighteenth century English deism.<sup>2</sup>

The retrograde movement from belief is not accounted for by divisions among Protestants, nor by the gradual cessation of the sort of alliance of Protestantism with "Humanism" or worldly culture that existed in the early Reformation time.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Herbert of Cherbury, *De Veritate*, A.D. 1624.

<sup>2</sup> As to which, see *Cunningham Lectures* of the late Principal Cairns.

But it has been represented as a "reaction" from the fervours of early Reformation movement: as if ebb-tide had been a reaction from the upward flow. Reaction from that warm, glowing fulness of life which constitutes health is negative *disease*, the foretaste and threatening foreshadow of corruption ending in death (morally and spiritually, negative disease itself is positive, as the absence of "light" is darkness). And the glowing warmth of early Reformation evangelism was far from historically appearing to be a mere unhealthy feverish excessiveness.<sup>1</sup> It apparently was *not* that excessiveness of fever-heat, which really is weakness, even when complexionally violent, and which by necessity of nature is followed by fever-chill.

It was not excessive as compared, *e.g.*, with the "first love" of primitive Christianity, and the claim on man's affection that is constituted by God's "unspeakable Gift." Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, were not, more than Paul, David, Moses, fever-heated, irrational visionaries like the Anabaptists, but in truth were the foremost statesmen of their time. Let us begin with recognising *the fact* of a worldliness, operative in the Protestant communities, in displacement of the Reformation vital godliness; and that, whatever may have been the cause of it, will enable us to comprehend the rise of negativism or scepticism as its effect.

Warburton said,<sup>2</sup> with reference to latitudinarian worldliness of English and Scottish clergy, "Socinus is at the root." And his young correspondent well knew, in the existing condition of his own Church, what would suffice to account for the rising of negativism or scepticism in Reformation Christendom;—that Church being, under leadership<sup>3</sup> of his own colleague, Robertson the historian—friend of Hume and Gibbon—far gone in worldliness, that was destined to present, in her supreme court,<sup>4</sup> a resolute front of opposition to his

<sup>1</sup> See, *e.g.*, Knox's *Letter*—of remonstrance, on account of languor—to the *Reformed Scottish Nobility*.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. John Erskine, in Sir H. Moncreiff's (senr.) *Life of Erskine*.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards—*Guy Mannering*.

<sup>4</sup> Assembly, A.D. 1796,—when Erskine, then an aged man, began his reply with his famous "Moderator, rax (= reach) me that Bible." The occasion of his first writing to Warburton was, his sending him his own first publication, in defence of natural theology, against a "Moderate," Dr.



movement for some beginning of action on behalf of missions to the heathen.

This was in the century after such apologetic works as those of Grotius (A.D. 1622) and of Baxter<sup>1</sup> had begun to appear in the literature of Christian communities. And it is to be observed that those earlier apologies were occasioned, not by movement, through publication of books or otherwise, in open opposition to Christianity as from without its pale, but rather by a felt necessity of dealing with objections that were, so to speak, in the atmosphere of the communities, and perhaps (as in Baxter's own case, and more memorably in Pascal's) were felt as working in the Christian writer's own mind. That itself has a significance of suggesting that moral and spiritual decadence, as compared with the original Reformation full healthiness of living religion, was preparing the way for negativism or scepticism relatively to the truth of the religion. And when we look from the seventeenth century down along the course of the eighteenth, we everywhere see symptoms of mournful progress in that moral and spiritual decadence, as indicated, within the churches, by abandonment of the Reformation dogmatic faith;<sup>2</sup>—dissolution or decay of that *positive belief*, of the substance of evangelical Christian truth, which is the root, the living foundation, of practical Christianity in heart and soul.

In Britain the decline and fall was exemplified as with a tragically vivid completeness. Thus, in the preface to his famous *Analogy* (A.D. 1736), Butler stated that at that time men professing enlightenment did not so much as pretend to inquire about the truth of religion, but openly spoke and proceeded on the view that religion was now definitively so found untrue, as by common consent of capable judges to be held a

George Campbell of St. Andrews, who—like the Socinians—threw cold water on that appeal to *reason*.

<sup>1</sup> See above, "prefatory anecdote."

<sup>2</sup> "There had, however [A.D. 1736], been no revival of real religion and vital godliness in England. The Church continued as thoroughly sunk in worldliness and carelessness, as perfectly indifferent about all the high and holy functions of a church of Christ, at the middle as at the beginning of last century, and hence infidelity as well as irreligion continued to prevail."—Cunningham, at p. 233 of the work referred to at p. 195.

mere antiquated hollow thing, not worth inquiring about. But at that time those who professed the religion were showing that *they* no longer seriously believed it as professed, and were on a down-slide of abandoning the profession. A strong party in the English Establishment were understood to have abandoned the evangelical fundamental of the Godhead of Christ. And outside of the Establishment the Presbyterians, for instance, at one time so strong in learning and ability of their ministers, and the hold they had on the respectable middle class, had begun to show that among them, too, "Socinus was at the root." The present writer has seen at Chester Philip Henry's pulpit Bible in what had come to be a Unitarian chapel. If it remain there, Unitarianism may go thence (1 John ii. 19); but it is sad to think that now, in congregations like what that of the Henrys once was, while husbandmen are sleeping, enemies may be preparing the way for infidelity by sowing Socinian tares. In a great cathedral city, at the opening of a Presbyterian church, he found that among Christians there Presbyterianism is in a measure regarded as a synonym for Socinianism. And the cause is shown by history in which the Presbyterian sliding from the Reformation faith is seen resulting, before the close of the eighteenth century, in reduction of that once powerful and famous evangelical Church to the quality and dimensions of little more than a few Socinian chapels.

And the cause of that cause we see in the advancing worldliness,<sup>1</sup> which was a death-chill at the heart of even historical belief in Christianity among those professing it (cp. Matt. xxiv. 12). Thus, very soon after the close of that century, Andrew Fuller, in his work, *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Compared*—as tested by their practical fruits respectively—reproduces, from published writings of leading

<sup>1</sup> "After the Revolution of 1688 . . . there was no real revival of true religion in the Church of England; and even the Nonconformists, who, from the Restoration to the Revolution, had been, while subjected to great hardships and persecutions, almost the only preservers and promoters of piety and godliness, soon fell to a considerable extent under the influence of the loose latitudinarian semi-infidel spirit which prevailed almost universally in the Established Church."—Cunningham, at p. 230 of the work referred to at p. 195.

representative Unitarians of the immediately preceding period, ample proof that in their community practical religion had substantially no real existence, excepting some survival, in individual cases, of an inherited Puritan feeling without the Puritan faith. It is with immediate reference to what thus appeared in England that<sup>1</sup> Principal Fairbairn of Glasgow<sup>2</sup> made the general statement, that *the history of religion as a real thing might be written without mention of Socinians*.

So it went elsewhere in the British isles. In Scotland, for instance, under a regime of "a cold Moderatism," in what now is known as "the dark age" of the national Church, at the close of the century Ramsay's book on *The Socinian Creed* was written by way of antidote to publications by leading ecclesiastics of an Establishment based on the Westminster standards. And at the beginning of the present century it was a Herculean labour<sup>3</sup> to deliver the Irish Presbyterian Church from a bondage of tolerated anti-trinitarianism that had endured through another "dark age." All which meant departure of the old Reformation life and power of *religion* in men's hearts: leaving their minds open and unguarded—"empty, swept, and garnished"—for entrance of the spirit of *unbelieving* or sceptical worldliness,—since "nature abhors a void."<sup>4</sup>

On the European Continent—as is known and read of all men—the worldliness with its *make-belief* not only passed over the German mother-country of the Reformation: producing in the first instance a frigid, pedantic, "dead orthodoxy"

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 173.      <sup>2</sup> Introduction to Dorner's *Person of Christ*.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Dr. Henry Cooke*, by Porter.

<sup>4</sup> "Perhaps a still worse result has been, that some of the defenders of Christianity, having themselves very defective and erroneous views of the doctrines of the gospel, as was certainly the case with many of those who chiefly conducted the defence of revelation against the English infidels of the early part of last century, have been led to explain away the doctrines of Christianity, to prune them down to what the natural reason of mankind might be inclined to receive as true and probable, and to reduce the Christian revelation to little more than a republication of the law of nature" (p. 191 of *Theological Lectures*, the first thoughts, as professor, of Principal Cunningham of Edinburgh, the greatest master in theology Scotland ever produced).

—stark and stiff repulsive—where once a living joyful apprehension of the evangel of grace had filled the land with song. Before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes it had visited the French Reformed Church, whose record of a high heroic spirit is perhaps the most glorious in the annals of the early Reformation movement among the peoples. From her there had gone out the most celebrated sceptic of the seventeenth century before Scotland produced the most celebrated sceptic of the eighteenth,—if not of all time hitherto. Her exiles, in the lands of their dispersion, made such a mixed impression that “French Calvinist” might on some lips be a synonym for clever sceptic. And Calvin’s own Geneva—erst the Jerusalem of highest and most advanced Reformation evangelism—at the opening of the present century had come to be the head-centre of a “neology” which, now better known as “German Rationalism,” was essentially a reappearance of what in the early Reformation time was known as the Socinianism of Racow.

The late Principal Cunningham<sup>1</sup> said that Dr. Rigg, in tracing the Maurician corruptions of the faith to influence of the *philosophy* of Coleridge and his school, had not sufficiently allowed for a remaining influence of early Socinianism formally abandoned. But the two influences really were one. An old Puritan spoke of “new theology” as “old philosophy,”—naturalistic speculation employing the terminology of supernatural Christian revelation. Conversely, “new philosophy” may be “old theology.” Socinianism of the Reformation time was this new philosophy *by anticipation*,—as the chrysalis is future butterfly. That is to say, the *naturalism*, which the old Socinianism had in its heart, in its rationalistic rejection of scriptural evangelism, needed only a congenial sunshine, of favouring outward conditions, in order to take wing, and rise, and soar, as a naturalistic speculation of real or imitation (shoddy) transcendentalism. And the same naturalism is perhaps here and there to be heard in what passes among “the simple” for “the preaching” (1 Cor. i. 21–24), by the foolishness of which, while the world by

<sup>1</sup> See preceding footnote—*clarum et venerabile nomen*!—in a review of Dr. Rigg’s *Modern Anglican Theology*.



wisdom knew not God, it pleased God to save them which believe.

Paul's "gospel" may thus (2 Tim. iv. 1-4) come to be displaced by another which is none (Gal. i. 8). In place of *that* evangel (1 Cor. i. 21-24), which (1 Cor. ii. 1) he determined to make the *only* thing in his preaching, there may come what excludes it, a mere naturalism that might be preached by a Buddhist revivalist.<sup>1</sup> This may now be tolerated, welcomed, sought after, demanded, in communities ostensibly evangelical; as it was among the English Presbyterian hearers of Pierce and Hallet, A.D. 1717: "it shall be like priest like people." But if it be so, the Reformation evangelism of religion is dead or dying in that people's heart; and the worldliness of naturalism, whether it pass through the chrysalis form of Socinianism or not, is there in possession, and ready to rise into full-flown manifestation in unbelief, open and confessed. Christ and His apostles, when by their example and by their express instructions inculcating defence of His religion, presuppose real *belief* of it, and consequent believing confession of it. Where there is not that, there already is an inchoate assault on the religion; since non-confession is passive denial (Matt. x. 33, cp. ver. 32), so that evasion is oblique negation, and a substitute is a supplanter.

## SEC. 2. *Movement within the New Apologetic Period.*

The eighteenth century has been pronounced "the golden age of mediocrity": a censure that is not refuted by speaking about "vast material progress"—which is irrelevant. At least the Protestantism of that century seemingly was under disability of a flat commonplace, that is fatal in religion, and also in philosophy, as (Hor.) it is in poetry and art. Unbelief, on the other hand, may appear to have in that century reached its highest (or lowest?); since now it came out openly against Christianity on the field of argument by reasoning, where in the primitive oppositions to this religion

<sup>1</sup> Not long ago a Buddhist priest spoke highly in commendation of Christianity, especially its gospel history—*excepting* two things, which precisely are the two things left out of the "preaching" (?) above alluded to.

the argument had mainly been mere force, that gave not to the religion a fair field, of "place for apology." In any case, through now concentrating our attention on that eighteenth century, with its antecedents and consequences, we shall be on a way to comprehension of the existing apologetic situation, as arising out of that grand assault of *learned unbelief* on Christianity and its records, which has been so notable a character of the spiritual history of the century that now is in its last decade.

We will not linger on the suggestive question, why, while Christians glory in the unchanged antiquity of their faith, should it be offensive to unbelievers to be told that their present position was held by unbelieving predecessors? Strauss and others might take it ill to be twitted with the circumstance, that the learning, of which they made large display, had been borrowed without due acknowledgment from such Christian treasures as that of English Lardner's master-work. But even to the most sensitive ambition there was nothing essentially mortifying in the historial fact, that the recent "theories," which have played a great part in the movement, were anticipated by English deists of last century: not only Renan's, which at bottom is only old "vulgar infidelity" in a new dress, but also the mythic theory which made Strauss famous, and even (on the part of one who was supposed to be not quite sane) Baur's peculiar "theory" of primeval Christian history.

Those deists, it is to be noted, did not give their strength to such theorising,—that is, to framing a *view*<sup>1</sup> of Christ and Christianity, explaining *what* we are to think about Him and His religion,—what is or can be the real fact regarding Him,—if it be *not*, what Christendom believes, that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself"? They occupied themselves with assailing this belief, labouring to destroy its defences: in publications which in great measure have ceased to be read, but with arguments which, no doubt, will continue to be repeated; as—Baur tells us—the now current objections are in large measure a repetition of arguments which were employed by Celsus (and answered by Origen and others) in the primitive period of apologetics. And the

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *theory*.

bane, which thus again has come, has again produced its antidote.

The direct or indirect, overt or covert, opposition to Christian belief, that arose on occasion of decadence of Christian life in the churches, was met by numerous apologetic publications, which constitute a new library of apologetics. Into the warfare of defence there were drawn a variety of gifts from varied regions of the Christendom that was threatened in its faith: *e.g.*, not only the fervid evangelical genius of Baxter, and the profoundly spiritual intelligence of Halyburton, among British Calvinists, but Dutch Arminian Grotius, Amyraldian French Abaddie in a once deservedly celebrated work, and, most celebrated of all, Romanist Blaise Pascal (*Thoughts on Religion*). Even Socinians did yeoman service in the standard works of Lardner and Jeremiah Jones. The literature thus produced has the peculiar interest of a *living* literature, that "has battle in it," as contrasted with mere academic book-work. It thus resembles the primitive Church apology in respect of being a veritable "earnest contending," as *pro aris et focis* ("for altar and hearth"), on the part of men who see and feel that the religion, which they deem the highest and most precious thing on earth, is now put on a real trial before the world, so as to be imperilled in its hold on the mind and heart and life of the community.

Sir James Stephen, who<sup>1</sup> so disparages labour of this kind, unwittingly bears a strong testimony to its value. For, with immediate reference to the English apologists of that early time, he states that in learning, ability, and judicial temper they were incomparably superior to the assailants as a class. Now that itself is a presumptive proof of the truth of the religion they defended;<sup>2</sup> and no doubt has its effect in establishing men in the belief of this religion,—including this critic (Sir J. S.) himself, who cannot but be influenced in favour of belief by his opinion, that at such a testing time far the best qualified judges were on the side of the religion assailed. But apart from this consideration of the just weight of the personal testimony of such men, the library of their apolo-

<sup>1</sup> See above, "prefatory anecdote."

<sup>2</sup> Cp. "Arnauld, le grand Arnauld, fait mon apologie."

getic works is intrinsically a treasure of inestimable value for all following time: as may appear from the fact that so many of them continue to be reprinted and read,—thus held as things which “the world will not willingly let die,”—while the works they answered are for the most part remembered only from their answers, as the work of Celsus is extant only in Origen’s refutation of it.

Excepting a few, such as those of Baxter and Halyburton, their works are deficient in respect of the primitive ardour and glow, as of confession with preparedness for martyrdom. And they are very detrimentally characterised by an incompleteness, a coldness, if not a backwardness, in the matter of setting forth evangelical Christianity in substance,—which is the true heart and core of real defence, as in the great siege of Jerusalem the temple was the central citadel of the national strength.<sup>1</sup> But they are greatly superior to the primitive apologists in comprehensiveness of view of the whole subject and its bearings, as well as in thoroughness in discussion of particular questions or expiscation of detailed points. And to some extent they make the ground their own, so that now the straight way to master it is, to begin with learning from them or studying through them. The highly important position, for instance, of Butler in his *Analogy*, it is quite useless expenditure of energy for any one to think of making his own otherwise than through that master-work. And Lardner’s great collection of materials is so complete and accurate, that subsequent scholarship cannot

<sup>1</sup> “Wherever personal piety and vital godliness sink to a low ebb, the views of the Christian system which generally prevail invariably assume a Socinian or a Pelagian, or what is virtually the same thing, though not so fully developed, a latitudinarian cast. This was remarkably the case in England during the deistical controversy of last century; and accordingly, in the writings of the defenders of Christianity during that period, you find many erroneous and defective views of the doctrines of revelation, many attempts to show how reasonable they are when properly and rationally explained, *i.e.* when explained away; how easily infidels might admit them when freed from the corruptions which creeds and systems had introduced; or, in other words—for this is the real meaning of men of that class when they use such language—when stripped of everything that is mysterious, and reduced to the level of what is fully and in every respect comprehensible by human reason.”—Cunningham, at pp. 264, 265 of the work referred to above, p. 195.



warrantably profess to do anything in the way of addition or correction beyond some little gleanings in a field whose full harvest he has gathered.

When Lord Napier's engineering had brought his force within striking distance of Magdala, the Abyssinian campaign was virtually finished, as with a *veni, vidi, vici*: there, in its heart of strength, the Ethiopian empire, with its emperor, was as it were destroyed by a look. And some such preparation, for final summary disposal of emergent oppositions to Christian faith, may be made through simply studying apologetics in the works of past masters of it.

The emergent oppositions may, as in Baxter's experience, be in a man's own doubts and difficulties,—*e.g.*, in seasons of mental or spiritual depression,—rising in the mind with reference to rational foundations of historical belief in the religion. Or they may arise in the community where a man is placed as leader, perhaps as public teacher and witness of the religion: the publication of some infidel work, or some movement of sceptical propagandism, creating a situation of perilous crisis for the community,—where it is, "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child." There may be unreasoning panic, and in some cases a shipwreck as concerning faith, on account of some thus emergent oppositions which the people imagine to be new and strange: a panic and disaster that would not have taken place if the public teacher of this religion had known from study of the past, that the seemingly new and strange objection is really old.

Here it may be new and strange through ignorance of the past. And good is done by showing from the past that it is an old exploded objection, which now looks new because it was forgotten; having been weighed and found worthless,—judged, executed, buried out of memory,—in a preceding generation. There is a preparedness for on such occasion "strengthening the brethren" (Luke xxii. 32) in the leader's being acquainted with that past, and so not personally liable to panic; as Coleridge, when asked whether *he* believed in ghosts, said, No: that he had seen too many of them. On the other hand, if at such a time the leaders be blind misleaders, bewildering because bewildered, that may be traceable

to laziness or presumption, of men failing to learn for the present what is taught by the past.

Still, there has to be a reality of the religion, a life of the faith: otherwise—as has been felt in connection with last century apologists—the apologetic may be only so much firing blank cartridge at a Magdala capital of dark empire.<sup>1</sup> The late Principal Cairns (*Cunningham Lectures*) perhaps went too far in his honouring the *internal evidence*—or, the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*—as if in a measure making it to supersede the external or *producibile* evidence; but he did good service in repeatedly and very earnestly calling attention to the subject. And in the same interest we make the following Note from a different point of view:—

NOTE on the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*.—The witness of the Spirit is (*Conf. of Faith*, chap. i. sec. 5)<sup>2</sup> by the evangelical theology placed as being in Scripture a self-evidencing *divinity* of authorship (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 20, 21), or *oracular* quality of the Scripture (Rom. iii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 11), which is what makes that Scripture to be a suitable object or objective ground of *spiritual faith*.<sup>3</sup> But to put this internal evidence *in place of* that external evidence,<sup>4</sup> in respect of which

<sup>1</sup> “It is right that all attacks made upon Christianity with a show of reasoning and learning should be met, as they always have been, with better reasoning and superior learning. But the exposure of infidel objections and the establishment by unanswerable arguments of the truth of the Christian revelation are not enough to secure the great objects for which that revelation was given; and the diminished extent to which an open profession of infidelity has subsequently prevailed, though in some measure to be accounted for by temporary and adventitious causes, may also be regarded as proving that nothing so much contributes to discourage and prevent a general public profession of infidelity as an increase in the number of those who are living under the influence of personal religion, and are really taking the Word of God as a light unto their feet and a lamp unto their path.”—Cunningham, at p. 233 of the work referred to above, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> This admired section—see commentary on it in Cunningham’s work above referred to—is no Westminster specialty. It is, with perhaps one shade of local modification, an abstract of the relative part of Calvin’s *Institutes*, representing a commonplace of Reformation evangelism of doctrine.

<sup>3</sup> Owen, *The Reason of Faith* = “rationale of an internal evidence.”

<sup>4</sup> Cunningham (in the work referred to at p. 195) holds (pp. 226, 324, 330) that Owen, referring to Baxter (whom he does not name), fails

the Scripture, or the religion, is an object or objective ground of rational assent and historical belief (see Acts xxvi. 27), would, in the view of that evangelical theology, be a dangerously irrational mysticism, like that of the fanatical Anabaptists and others in relying on "new revelations" of the Spirit *in them*, instead of inward light for seeing what is outwardly revealed *in the Word*.

It really displaces *both* kinds of evidence—the internal as well as the external—from their appropriate respective offices. The external evidence is displaced—its "occupation is gone"—if its appropriate office, of showing that the religion of Scripture is entitled to man's assent of reason, or historical faith, be usurped by the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*; which addresses itself, not to the common reason of all men who are simply sane, but (1 Cor. ii. 14; cp. Matt. xiii. 10–17) only to a spiritual discernment which is a special "gift" conferred on some men. And, on the other hand, this witness of the Spirit, if placed as an external evidence—which *in fact it is not*, since it does not reach the common reason of mankind—is so far withdrawn from its own appropriate, peculiar, and distinctive office and place, and sent away to what may be mischievous misapplications—as of "idle hands" (*Watts'* hymn), while its abandonment of its one true place and office is a fatal damage to the true life of religion in its heart.

The perilousness of so dislodging the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* from its one true place and office, as a witnessing "*in and with the Word*" (C. of F. as above) in our hearts, is illustrated by a recent suggestion that, for the purpose of sustaining our faith in Scripture as the Word of God, that witness of the Spirit should in some way come in place of *truthfulness* of the Word, in its representations regarding plain matter of historical fact (see, on the contrary, the question of Christ, John iii. 12). This is abandonment of the Reformation ground of "the Bible alone." It is lapse into the old "fanatical" reliance on "new revelations" of the Spirit, to enable us to put implicit faith in a word which is not infallible. It joins hands with a rationalism that thus finds itself with "strange bedfellows." And by confounding things which differ, it puts rational belief in peril of being lost in a fog.

In the present connection, then, with the general subject to make due acknowledgment of the competency and value of that external evidence, which Baxter contended for. He sees in Halyburton the same one-sidedness (as in Owen).

of apologetics historically regarded, we perceive, that to put the inward witness of the Spirit *in place of* external evidence addressing the common reason of mankind, would so far be,—1. to put the proof of religion out of reach of perception for mankind in general, and,—2. to bereave the spiritual faith, which alone is saving, of *that support* which (cp. 2 Pet. i. 5–21)—as in Baxter's case—it might receive from a simply historical belief, established, in the judgment of reason, by such external evidence, that can be known and read of all men, as that of miracle in working and predicting,—to the effect, *e.g.*, of demonstrating the *historical trustworthiness* of Scripture in its representations as to matter of fact.

Still, the external evidence is in practical effect as if hollow and heartless (see the "*persuaded*" at Luke xvi. 31) where there is heartless hollowness of religious profession on the part of those presenting the evidence, or of the community of professed believers, on whose behalf it is presented (Isa. xliii. 10), as (1 Tim. iii. 15) "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." And if the last century apologists were as a class deficient in respect of cordial explicit confession of evangelical Christianity in substance as being *the thing* defended by them,—it may appear that (Acts xiv. 3) God provided for what thus was wanting, in the direction so earnestly insisted on by Principals Cunningham and Cairns, through *otherwise* "giving testimony to the word of His grace." For, simultaneously with that good service on the ground of external evidence, the Church was visited with what well might be regarded as a new creation of life like that which had appeared in the early-primitive period of apologetics. This movement,<sup>1</sup> originating and spreading variously from independent centres, was invariably characterised by reappearance, in cordial full rejoicing proclamation, of the early Reformation doctrine of "the gospel of the grace of God." So, about the time when Butler, with characteristic seriousness of sad earnest, was making his memorable statement about (cp. Isa. liii. 1) the contemptuous incredulity with which religion had come to be regarded by men professing enlightenment, and when on the part of those professing it the religion had reached its lowest and worst

<sup>1</sup> Ryle, *Christian Heroes of Last Century*.



condition of seeming spiritual abandonment in worldliness,—then, apart from the apologetic movement to which he was a contributor so puissant, there began, at first in isolated cases of individuals and localities, a *spiritual movement*, as it were a stirring among the dry bones in Ezekiel's valley of vision, where lay "the House of Israel," forsaken because forsaking.

It now is seen to have been a veritable awakening as from the dead (Eph. v. 14), a revival or restoration of the lost or waning life of primeval Christianity. It extended widely over western Christendom, which had so profound a need of such awakening: always in a manner that illustrated and enforced, relatively to a real defence of religion, successful in production or in restoration of belief, the principle which was declared to the weakling Zerubbabel in connection with the appointed restoration of God's Temple and replacement of its Candlestick,—“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zech. iv. 6). And that evangelical awakening had, both in Europe and in America,<sup>1</sup> exercised a distinctly perceptible influence on the general course of thought and feeling previously to (*preparatorily* for?) that grand assault on Christianity by a really learned unbelief, in meeting which, in its full development, the modern apologetics has been led on to its existing culmination, at what perhaps is near the close of such trials of mankind in history.

Simultaneously, in *philosophy* there was a felt need of awakening, which was granted, and which has resulted in one of the most remarkable movements in the intellectual history of mankind. “Hume,” said Kant, “first awakened me out of my dogmatic slumbers.”<sup>2</sup> But Hume, with his universal scepticism, was an inevitable product of a shallow sensation-

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *Life of Brainerd* and *Works of Jonathan Edwards*: particularly, Edwards' two works on *Revival of Religion*—true principia of the subject. Berkeley's apologetic work, *Alciphron or The Minute Philosopher*, was prepared in America.

<sup>2</sup> See prize essays on the question, “What progress has Metaphysics made in Germany since the time of Leibnitz and Wolff?” Berlin, A.D. 1796. The writers are Schwab, Reinhold, and Abicht. The propounder of the theme, with special reference to Kantism, was the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences.

alism in philosophy, "the sentence after the last," of what nowadays is widely prevalent, especially among "scientists" (employing "weapons of precision"—*e.g.* the microscope?), under such names as "positive philosophy," or under no name as a simply practical epicurism. That philosophy, in this its reappearance, was a product of the human mind reflecting on itself *in that worldliness* of condition into which the professedly Christian communities had lapsed in the closing of the early Reformation period. It ran into a shallow narrowness of mere "scientism," not rising beyond physical nature, that might call itself "the Baconian philosophy": though Bacon<sup>1</sup> would have deeply scorned it; as it elicited the *sæva indignatio* of Warburton's dictum, "It is well known that the best mathematician in England is the worst reasoner in it."<sup>2</sup> The sensationalist psychology ("doctrine regarding mind or soul")—which Comtians nowadays regard as if it were a new revelation to them, a distinguishing glory of *their* "philosophy"—was expounded by Locke,<sup>3</sup> himself a Christian apologist,<sup>4</sup> a real master, with a solidly persistent force of penetrative intelligence not equalled by any of its recent expositors; to be thereupon answered, point for point,<sup>5</sup> by Leibnitz, true father of the German philosophy, with at least an equal copiousness of luminous power of reflective thought. But still there was need of awakening from "dogmatic slumbers."

So Hume came, to displace the Berkeleyan dilly-dallying between Yes and No (cp. the mediæval title *Sic et Non*) with a persistent following out of the sensationalism, carrying out its principles to their legitimate logical conclusion. And the result was—universal scepticism. That really was a *reductio ad absurdum* of the sensationalism (and may have been so intended by Hume, who spoke of speculations of this kind as on his part "a sort of philosophical delirium"). He was gifted with a comprehensive grasp of the relative "learning

<sup>1</sup> See his *Essays*—"Of Atheism."

<sup>2</sup> In our day there are many real scientists who at the same time are philosophers, rising from physical law to principles and ideas, and theologians, believing in God.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on the Human Understanding*.

<sup>4</sup> *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

<sup>5</sup> *Nouveaux Essai sur l'Entendement Humain*.

of thought," as well as a philosophical acumen, that makes him to be of a different world from such an "agnostic" as Professor Huxley (whose comprehension of Hume on miracle<sup>1</sup> seems on a level with his Greek). It was not the intellectual power, which made his greatness, that he had in common with sensational psychologists. What he had in common with them was only *the presupposition* of their psychology, that all human knowledge is primarily received in and through corporeal sensation. And the use he made of the presupposition was,—not, like them, to build on it a system of "positive" or otherwise-named "philosophy," but—to show that there is and can be no solid foundation of certainty in knowledge of anything. (Renan came to the same conclusion—philosophically—from the same premiss.) *This* it was that occasioned the "awakening" of Kant and others.

Seeing that the sensationalism thus leads to the conclusion, that there is no real foundation for solid knowledge, they sought for a foundation in a deeper psychology. And this was found, by both Reid and Kant,<sup>2</sup> in the direction that had been indicated in Leibnitz's answer to Locke. Where Locke had said (misapplying an old scholastic maxim), "There is nothing in the understanding that was not first in sensation" (*in sensu—really* = "in primary apprehension"), Leibnitz answered, "Except *understanding itself*" (*nisi intellectus ipse*). 1. The understanding itself, the knowing or percipient mind, is a thing known to us, in our consciousness or inward awareness of all our knowledge, feeling, desiring, willing,<sup>3</sup> a thing specifically, yea, generically different, of a different world, from that whole material system which makes itself felt by us in corporeal sensation. 2. Even our primary apprehension of that material world outside of us, said Reid, is not mere sensation.<sup>4</sup> It is a distinctly *rational* perception, the mind's apprehending an object outside of itself; as reflection is an internal perception of the mind apprehending itself as

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that the two were in a sense compatriots; Kant being by extraction a Scotchman,—the grandson of a saddler from Fife ("Cant").

<sup>3</sup> Cp. *cogito ergo sum*, above, p. 191.

<sup>4</sup> *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, and *Essays*—"Perception."

an object of knowledge. 3. *In* the understanding, there are *principles* (and elements?) of knowledge, distinct from the individual things that are apprehended in our act of knowing particulars, but which are brought into action and manifestation on the surface of our mind in its process of thinking about particulars:—such as, *e.g.*, (1) the “law of contradiction,” which is the principle of all deductive reasoning; (2) “the law of cause and event,” or the causal judgment, which is the principle of all inductive reasoning, or of real physical “scientism” as distinguished from a mere dabbling in the surface history of nature (dabbling otherwise called, in its totality, “the positive philosophy”); and (3) principles or elements of æsthetics (*Taste* = sense of the beautiful), and of ethics (*Conscience* = sense of the morally good);—all aspiring toward *Life*, in (4) true knowledge of God (cp. John xvii. 3), though the aspiring should be as an eagle that has not light nor atmosphere to soar in, and though the soul, made for aspiring, should actually not aspire, but “cleave unto the dust” (Ps. cxix. 25).

The direction thus indicated was that of an idealising spiritualistic philosophy, in revulsion from a so-called philosophy that is essentially narrow and shallow materialising in its tendency and goal. In that direction, Reid and the Scottish school, with followers of high distinction in France, took the solidly safe way of adhering to “common sense,” founding on principles and elements of knowledge that are given to all men in primary apprehension of real objects, and that place all men under an irresistible necessity of accepting them as true; while it is the office of philosophy to separate them from the particular things in connection with which the mind becomes aware of them, and to build them up into a system conformably to the requirements of their nature. Kant, on the other hand,—in what Jacobi, “the German Plato,” reckoned a fatal mistake,—threw away that primary knowledge of real things which we obtain in external and internal perception. He retained only the “understanding” (*intellectus ipse*) which is awakened into action on occasion of perceptions external and internal. And he sought to build a system out of elements and principles—not *given* to the understanding as things apprehended in such perception, but—that are *in* the structure of understanding as such.



The transcendentalism of speculation thus exemplified, that soars in or into disconnection with knowledge of real things attained in primary perceptive apprehension, was by and by found to be an eagle soaring without atmosphere or light. It ended in pantheism: in whose view there are no real things, but only a universal thing, which is an ocean of characterless being (= nothing?). The same result had earlier appeared in the pantheism of Spinoza; which had followed by logical necessity from the principle which to his apprehension really underlies the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*. And Jacobi maintained earnestly that the same result inevitably follows, by logical necessity of the nature of the case, wherever a speculative philosophy—that is, a *real* philosophy, trying to see things in their principle, to comprehend them as a system—is “transcendental” to the effect of not taking into its view the primary materials of knowledge that are given in external and internal perception (including intuitions of conscience and taste).

But the intellectual awakening, which thus—in the person of Kant and others—preceded the recent grand assault of unbelieving “criticism” on Christianity, so far prepared believing scholars for meeting the assault. And the pantheistic or the atomistic naturalism (cp. “the Stoics and the Epicureans” at Acts xvii. 15–32), which was the real originative impulse in the “critical” assault—by mine or storm—was a leading instrumental cause of its inevitable defeat (“the defeat of rationalism”—*title of a chapter* in modern history). The defeat of rationalism—which is, of anti-supernaturalism—becomes inevitable when the matter comes to be *reasoned* out. For here again mere naturalism, which is essential in the being of a soaring pantheism as well as of a grovelling materialism, not only fails to satisfy the *reason*, in its craving (cp. Gen. i. 3, 16) for some real coherent *view*<sup>1</sup> of the things around us and within us as a system or connected whole. Also and especially, it has no provision for the soul or heart. For it has to exclude, from its innermost nature it repels and repudiates, what to man’s heart or soul is THE GREAT THING, whose reality is the constitutively crowning fact of the system,—the thing without

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *theory*.

which all other things are a system without a sun, an empire without a governmental metropolis, a body without informing light and life of spirit (Gen. ii. 7), namely, *free will*,—living personality, moral agency, rational spontaneity!—in God the Creator at one pole of the system, from which He is distinct while He “filleteth all in all” and “worketh all in all”; and at the other pole in creatures who are His image in “spirituality, freedom, immortality,” while it is in Him that they “live, and move, and have their being.”

Thus the speculative transcendentalism, though it should lead the soul, through some Red Sea passage, out of the Egypt of a narrow shallow sensationalism that lands in scepticism, yet after all, if it end in a mere naturalism called pantheistic, only leaves the soul unprovided for in a Sinaitic wilderness, there to die (Deut. viii. 3). The vital question is about, not merely intellect or understanding, but *the soul*, the “spirit” that is “in man,” the thing in him that aspires,—the man himself in his true being’s being (Gen. ii. 7; Job xxxii. 8). Hence all mere naturalism is for man a dead thing, giving him no Canaan land of blessed rest; because it has nothing for the soul (Matt. xi. 28, 29; John iv. 10–14).

Who now reads the mighty folio of once great Gassendi’s exposition of Epicurism,—copious as Comte’s exposition of that old thing under a new name? But beside that folio there are tiny duodecimos, of writings which are being reprinted ever since Gassendi’s time, because they are being read by generation after generation of ever-new students, as if they had in them an evergreen life, like a flower-garden of amaranthines unfading at the base of an old Egyptian pyramid in the desert. For they *have* life in them. They have in them cardiphonia of manhood, utterances of soul or spirit, that abides not in mere nature, but aspires to native supernaturalism—of “spirituality, freedom, immortality”—emitting such cries as, “Man is a reed, but he is a reed that thinks. . . . He is greater than the universe, though it should destroy him; for the universe knows not it is destroying him, while he knows he is being destroyed.”

The Blaise Pascal mind may have capacity for mathematical and physical attainments higher than any Gassendi’s. But when Pascal becomes a man he puts away childish

things. And in his maturity that soul in him, which is quenchless flame against villainous Jesuitical falsehood, cannot find rest in any Cartesian transcendentalism,—not even though a Malebranche transfigure it into heavenliness of an idealism that sees all things in God. It is but a Sinaitic wilderness to him,—with no manna nor water from the Rock (1 Cor. x. 4)—if it come short of his personally finding (Job xxiii. 3) the living personal God Himself: a finding for which the faint and weary soul is ever longing, “as the hart panteth after the water brooks” (Ps. xlii. 1).

“The defeat of rationalism” thus had place, before the assault began, in the indestructible nature of the rational soul. As the discussion proceeded, the anti-supernaturalism, the essential inhumanism, as well as godlessness of worldliness (Col. ii. 8), which from the outset was the dead soul of rationalism in the unbelieving criticism, and which continued to be its intellectual as well as moral mainspring, had to come out with ever-growing distinctness into view. And so at last the rationalism visibly ran to seed, as found to be in speculation a mere blind thing, having *no* real view of a system of the world and man;—*because* its eyes were shut, its heart was darkened to the supernaturalism—of “spirituality, freedom, immortality”—in both man and God, which is the great thing, the sunlight of life in all and through the whole. It needed not that the blind thing should break out, as a miserable, furious, blind Polyphemus in his Cyclops cave, into socialistic antagonism to the family and to patriotism, as well as to all religion. When men saw its essential nature as ungodly in its worldliness (Acts xvii. 23),—that is, as soon as it came into clear daylight of self-manifestation,—the rationalism was destroyed, as Frankenstein was destroyed by the fiend he had evoked. When they perceived what sort of thing it was that, under sounding names, “encountered” the gospel in this new Athens, they rested in the faith of “Jesus and the resurrection”: that is to say (Acts xviii. 10), “as many believed as were ordained unto eternal life.”

So the Pharos-tower light was not quenched by that storm. After the grand assault has taken its course and spent its force, the religion is “seen as a light in the world,” and felt in the influences of its peace as a river, and of its

righteousness as waves of the sea. Among unbelievers of a speculative turn,—that is, who need to have something by way of “theory,” or *view*, of the system of things,—pantheism has now for some time given place to atomism,—Zeno to Epicurus. But practically there is between the two no real difference that concerns our inquiry. Atomism differs from pantheism by implying the substantive reality of individual things. And there is a verbal distinction, where there can be no real difference at bottom,<sup>1</sup> between a materialistic and a spiritualistic pantheism. But in connection with the subject of our inquiry all forms and modes of naturalism are essentially one and the same: in that they all alike are fatally exclusive of real provision for the rational soul. They have no real provision for the soul’s essential rationality of nature, but, on the contrary, shut it out from all possibility of such provision. Still more to the purpose, they have no provision, but shut out all hope of providing for deliverance from its criminality and corruption as fallen: that guilt and depravity, in fact, whose awful reality is attested, even among the heathen (Rom. ii. 14, 15, cp. i. 32), by whatever of conscience there is in man; since its operation in them is effectively a knowledge (cp. Acts xxviii. 4) of “the judgment of God, that they who do certain things are worthy of death.” The naturalistic systems all alike make impossible for man at once the real thing needful (Luke x. 42) and (Eccles. xii. 13) the one thing truly obligatory. And so (Ps. cxii. 4), when the matter is faithfully *reasoned* out, they all alike are found wanting through being weighed in a just balance: Zeno and Epicurus alike, as giving a serpent and a stone instead of fish and bread.

In the meantime, that reasoning, from the nature of the things in question, is corroborated as well as illustrated by practical effects. On the one hand, the mere naturalism, which in that criticism was the real assailant, has *effected* nothing, and has hardly ever pretended so much as to *try* to effect anything, in the way of actually benefiting mankind in its populations (cp. Gen. xii. 2; Gal. iii. 8); to say nothing

<sup>1</sup> The one substance in pantheism is *characterless*: while “materialistic” or “spiritualistic” means either a *character* or nothing.



of *retrieving the condition* of a mankind that is manifestly lost though it should not be fallen, miserable though it should not be sinful. Where, in the world's history, is there a community of men that either Stoicism or Epicurism ever effectively sought to bless (Ps. cxlv. 15) by placing it on a basis of atomistic or pantheistic atheism?<sup>1</sup> And in our day, among all the "scientists" and "philosophers," who believe that mere naturalism is the ultimate truth, how many are there so far gone in eccentricity as to think (cp. Isa. xxxv.) of trying to raise from a low condition, through belief of *that*, any one, even the least, of all the human "kindreds and tribes, and peoples and tongues"? Hardly any of them pretends to so much as think of such a thing.<sup>2</sup> *But this religion is doing it*,—through quiet commonplace men and women, who look at the doing of it as matter of course.

It is (cp. Acts iii. 12), in fact, *the only power under heaven that is so doing*. No other power under heaven is actually retrieving the condition of our fallen humanity. Christianity (Isa. xxxv.) is actually doing the work. Not only has it been so doing in the past, incessantly, for toward thirty centuries. It is so doing at this hour, as widely as the world, with so signal a success, that Christians themselves could not have ventured to imagine the possibility of it at the time when the unbelieving criticism was getting under weigh, perhaps with a view to extinction of this religion,—as Voltaire had only varied between one man and five in his estimate of the amount of force that would suffice to "crush the wretch" (*écraser l'infame*).<sup>3</sup> Witness Central Africa and the South Sea Islands: where communities, which within our memory

<sup>1</sup> Socialism is nowadays—*e.g.*, by Karl Marx—placed on a basis of theoretical atheism; but the system has not *thus* been set a-working by any philosophical school (of "transcendental" petroleum or dynamite? cp. Acts i. 8).

<sup>2</sup> When Mr. Stuart Mill had fairly thought out his economical system, so as to perceive the ideal of material well-being in a community, then he saw that the *true* well-being of man would, though that ideal should be realised, still remain to be sought, in a *mental* condition which Political Economy has no provision for.

<sup>3</sup> At the death of Christ, the estimated population of "the whole world" of Roman empire was 200 millions. According to a recently published estimate, the number of professing Christians in the world, which a century ago was 250 millions, now is 500 millions; so that within

were in the lowest condition of dark heathenish—perhaps cannibal—savagery, are now “sitting clothed, and in their right mind”: orderly Christian societies, with every appearance of having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come: in their condition showing as *a fact* a new moral and spiritual creation, as clearly as if in their respective localities new races of men had been directly produced from the dust of the earth, and there had been divinely breathed into their nostrils a breath of life to make living soul in every one so made of the dust.

Nor is it only thus at its extremities that the banian tree-forest of the last world-empire (Dan. iv., viii. 13), of the Son of Man, has been giving renewed proof of its indestructible vitality, notwithstanding manifold corruptions that would have destroyed anything merely human (Isa. i. 9). The renewed inquiry regarding the primeval history of Christianity and its documents, that was occasioned by the movement of unbelieving criticism, has led to a renewed proof of the genuine apostolic authorship of the Scriptures that were centrally brought into question: such a proof, and on such trial, that now their apostolic authorship<sup>1</sup> falls to be regarded as definitively established on proper grounds of scholarly historical judgment,—a settled fact of literary history of mankind, to question which would henceforward be only to betray incompetence, through ignorance or some other blinding disqualification. Also, the whole movement of inquiry has, through historical ascertainment, gone to the enriching and strengthening of the apologetic argument, for the restoration<sup>2</sup> or the consolidation of belief,—by a comprehensive thoroughness that in some respects is new, as the occasion for it was new; and especially, that thoroughness is a renewed expiscation of the *literary history* of early Christianity—both primitive and primeval—in connection with the distinctively spiritual that period the citizenship of Christ's kingdom has now advanced to being a third part of the earth's population from their being little more than a sixth part. And the *quality* is now as least as high as it then was.

<sup>1</sup> “Apostolic” in this relation means, belonging to the apostolic circle, which includes authorised associates of the apostles—*e.g.* Mark and Luke.

<sup>2</sup> *The Restoration of Belief* is the well-known title of one of Isaac Taylor's invaluable contributions to the defence of Christianity on grounds of literary historical judgment.

history of the religion, that has placed the claims of the Christian Scriptures in a new fulness of light on their vital or organic relation to the original foundation movement of that "kingdom which cannot be moved."

In Germany, whose Christian scholars took a leading part in the restoration of belief, there took place at the same time, especially among the learned pastorate, a widespread spiritual restoration, of serious personal religious conviction, which greatly adds to the value of the recent German contributions to technical apologetics.<sup>1</sup> And among the English-speaking peoples, which have made contributions of characteristically "sterling" value<sup>2</sup> to the relative learned labours of Christian thought,—bringing into decisive effectiveness of application their distinctive clear solid sense (1 Cor. x. 15), their masculine straightforward force of judgment (the present eulogist is not English nor Teutonic),—there has been a vast manifold expansion of multiplex Christian activities (Gal. vi. 10; Eph. vi. 16; Matt. v. 45–48), which itself—as indirect external evidence (Eph. ii. 7; 2 Cor. iii. 3)—is (cp. Matt. xi. 3–6) an apologetic of no inconsiderable cogency: while in religious revival of the churches there has been copious happy experience of the internal evidence.

The amount of *diffusion of the Scriptures* that has characterised this period—Bible Societies as it were reversing the Babel diaspora, or resuming the Pentecostal wonder (Acts ii. 5–11) of speaking the one "word of this life" in all tongues,<sup>3</sup>—shows a most powerful apologetic as well as propagandist movement "in all nations"; since the book is found always and everywhere its own most cogent witness and advocate: winning and commanding belief among the peoples it reaches,

<sup>1</sup> It suffices to name—of those departed—Tholuck and Neander. But Ullmann, with his friend and publisher, Perthes (see *Life* of), will be gratefully remembered in connection with the *Studien und Kritiken*, representing a campaign of which it can say, *quorum pars magna fui*.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* American Unitarian Norton's *Genuineness of the Gospels*.

<sup>3</sup> It is said that the London office of the British and Foreign Society pours out Bibles all the year round at the average rate of 10,000 a day: which in a week mounts up to more perhaps than the estimated whole number of Bibles that existed in the world previously to the invention of printing. A beautiful copy of the four Gospels can be purchased for 1d. ! There is even a *penny* New Testament !

and making the believing peoples to be ever-new monumental evidences of a new creation by this Word (Eph. ii. 10), while sustaining in them an internal evidence constituted by realising fellowship with God in Christ.

The direct *propagation of Christianity* in the world, by the purely spiritual process of addressing men's reason (Isa. i. 18) with "the gospel of the kingdom," has<sup>1</sup> during this period been prosecuted with a systematic energy, expressly *aiming at conquest of the world for God*, that has not been equalled in any previous period since the time of the original great campaign of apostles and their associate evangelists. In our new time, as tried by its works, the proper analogue of the ancient ecumenical councils, defining the high catholic doctrines of the religion, is—not a foolish imitation council, *e.g.*, "defining infallibility," but—such a missionary conference as took place A.D. 1872–73, like a war council of the new kingdom of grace and peace, consulting about the great campaign for the world's reconciliation unto God through the gospel.

How it is within the Church herself, in respect of living realisation of the heavenly ideal, it may be difficult for us to judge. The Christian's inward perception of the vastness of the distance between *him* and that ideal may tempt him to doubt the existence of any measure of true realisation (1 Kings xix.). Mr. Lecky, whose relative works—*Rationalism in Europe* and *History of European Morals*—place him on the very highest level as a judge in this relation, and who is the opposite of biassed in favour of distinctively evangelical Christianity, has, in a judicial finding, evidently prepared with extraordinary care, put on record his opinion that, as tried by a variety of practical tests he specifies, Christianity is, among the community of professed believers, more pure and vigorous than it ever was before since the time of the apostles. We, then, while not taking it on ourselves to judge in such a question, but only looking at the matter in connection with our present purpose of inquiry, namely, to judge as *to the apologetic situation*, may warrantably assume that, in the visible condition of the existing Christendom, there at least is nothing that amounts to refutation of the argument from other sources.

<sup>1</sup> See footnote above, p. 213.



SEC. 3. *As to the existing Apologetic Situation—particularly in connection with the New Testament.*

Here we begin with observing a change in the tactics of modern apologetics. Baxter, in his *Reasons of the Christian Religion*, has a first part occupied with what now might be called the natural theology of Christianity,—that is, its doctrine of the being and attributes of God as Creator and Ruler. It is only in a second part that he deals with what now makes the whole of Christian apologetics in our customary course,—namely, the proof of Christianity in particular, supposing the general fact of the being of a God, who is to be worshipped. So, too, it is in the earlier and better known work of Grotius, which continues to be used as a text-book basis of study. And now, in restricting itself to the second of their two parts, apologetics brings into view a noteworthy contrast of the modern apologetic situation to the apologetic situation in the primitive Church time. That is, in relation to the *supernatural*.

1. In our new time, the supernatural, in the extraordinariness of miracle and predictive prophecy, is the grand difficulty in the way of speculative unbelief; so that removal of this difficulty is the great problem of apologetics,—since the extraordinary supernaturalism is essential in the Christian system, in such wise that to explain it away is to explain Christianity away. In the primitive time, on the contrary, that in practice was hardly any difficulty at all. The unbelievers with whom the apologist had to deal did not ordinarily need to be reasoned into recognition of the feasibility of wonders, in work and word, as included in the system of a religion. The heathen religions had miracles and oracles of their own. The peoples, thus and otherwise, were familiar with the thought of such things as having place in historical reality. And they do not appear to have objected to this new religion on account, abstractly and generally, of its having miracle in work or word at the foundation of the system of its faith. Tertullian, in reproaching the heathens for their ungrateful disregard of the evidence of the Christian miracles of healing them, plainly has no thought of their questioning either the abstract possibility of such works or the fact of

their having been actually done. Irenæus, before his time, saw cause to reason, not about the fact or the possibility of miracle, but about the special character of the Christian miracles. And Celsus, the heathen writer of whose mind in this relation we have a direct view, so far from disputing the general position, that miracles may occur, really supports that position:—from the quotation of his work<sup>1</sup> made by Origen for the purpose of answering it, there has been constructed (by Doddridge) a fairly full outline of the career of Jesus as recorded in our Gospels, and it appears that of the historical reality of His miracles Celsus had no more doubt than the Christians had. Yet Celsus was one of those “philosophers” (Acts xvii. 18; cp. Col. ii. 8) whose theory was, in rigour of logic, atheistic.

Principal Cairns<sup>2</sup> has called on modern anti-supernaturalistic opponents of Christianity to observe, that they are mistaken in claiming that their position here coincides with that of the ancient philosophers in their rejection of the prodigies and oracles of popular belief: that—paradoxical as it may *now* appear—those philosophers might themselves be believers in supernaturalism, in “gods,” yea even in God. And certainly the Christian miracles and prophecies did not, on the score of extraordinary supernaturalism in them, constitute a difficulty in the way of belief among the heathen populations generally. The “scientism,” that now objects to miracles on behalf of mere naturalism, is thus completely opposed to the judgment of mankind in general.

On the other hand, that which to the primitive apologist was the great labour of difficulty, to the modern apologist is hardly any labour;—namely, contending for (“the monarchy”) *the unity* of government of the world,—against the heathenish conception of a plurality, or a multiplicity, of governing powers (which might be persons—cp. mere naturalism incoherently spelling “nature” with a capital *N*). Among those, on the contrary, whom the modern apologist contemplates as his audience, there are hardly any who will not admit, as if it were matter of course, that one living God, Creator and Ruler, is the only God, if there be any such thing as God at all. *Why* is this fundamental thus, as it

<sup>1</sup> *Logos Alēthēs*.

<sup>2</sup> *Cunningham Lectures*.

were, matter of course in modern civilisation? Apparently, *because Christianity has made it so*; with a hard labour, against worldliness of imagining a plurality of primary causes, which had to be continued in arduous inward conflicts with Gnosticism and Manichæism after the more palpable irrationalism of heathen superstitions had been destroyed in men's minds. If now the superstitions be cleared away, so that for the judgment of men's common reason there is a distinctly clear issue, of either mere stark naturalism or one living God,—that is not a fruit of mere “scientism” or merely naturalistic “philosophy.” At the time when the great work was achieved for mankind, philosophy, even in its last extreme of atheism, had proved impotent for destroying the superstitions: it really shared them (cp. an atheistic “scientist” now subject to bondage through fear of ghosts). The scientist, who takes advantage of the now general recognition of *unity* in mundane government, may thus appear to be really ploughing with the heifer of that religion he perhaps opposes in its name.

2. In reference to *that* mere naturalism, which in a sense is peculiar to the modern unbelief, it is to be observed pointedly, and kept full in view, that *supernaturalism*, in the sense at present in question, *is a fact*, not only in the wondrous works and words of this religion, but *throughout the whole system of things* which it represents, relatively to man as well as to God. That is, in the sense of higher than mere “physical nature,” distinct from her ordinary course of necessary causation or effectuation. The supernaturalism in the oracles and mighty works is “extraordinary” in the more comprehensive sense of involving a causation that is not ordinarily operative in the mundane system, and thus being outside of ordinary human experience. Hume thinks that on this account it is impossible to prove miracle by testimony. Stuart Mill thinks differently; as also do Paul, believing the testimony of his own eyes (1 Cor. xv. 8), and (2 Pet. i. 16–18; 1 John i. 1–3) all the original apostles, believing the testimony of their own bodily senses, and bidding us believe in what they have seen and heard and handled. But a “scientist” may be found objecting to the supernaturalism in miracle not only as *thus* extraordinary, but as simply *super* or *extra natural in the sense of* being distinct from merely

physical nature, or different from her necessary eventuation. And what we now observe is that *the supernaturalism or extranaturalism, thus objected to in the case of miracle, is all-pervasive in the system of things represented by Christianity, things human as well as things divine.*

Thus,—1. *With reference to God.* Mere naturalism, though it should not venture openly and flatly to deny His being, as a living personal Creator of all, yet may effectively shut Him out from being *our* God, by excluding His *providence* from actual government of the world,—“*doing according to His will*” in it (Dan. iv. 35), so as to be really the hearer of prayer, the Father who effectually “*careth for*” us. Or again, though deism should not thus, like Aristotle, banish providence to regions beyond the moon, but should acknowledge a *natural* providence of God as extending to our lowliness here, yet the anti-supernaturalism may assert itself in a *Pelagian* exclusion of God, from what may be called *gracious* providence, of which the sphere is a new creation in the salvation of sinners. And as to simply the being of a God, though He should not even be a Creator, but only a living person, *that* is a supremely supernatural thing, in the sense objected to by the unbelieving critic of Christianity,—namely, the sense of a thing distinct from simply physical nature, over and above that nature, or outside of it.

So,—2. *With reference to man.* The objection to divine supernaturalism, or to extraordinary or miraculous extranaturalism, on account of its involving what is outside of or over and above simply physical nature, applies also and equally to the being, and whole characteristic action and condition, of man as represented in this religion. For in the system of this religion man is a responsible person, a rational free agent; so that the anti-supernaturalism is incoherent and inconsequent unless it reject the man of Christianity as well as its God and Saviour, and make a man of its own, who shall be non-moral, non-rational, simply a piece of physical nature—perhaps the ornamental crowning piece. And again, though there had been no proof of supernaturalism, no actual supernatural fact, thus in the constitution of man’s nature, and consequently in all his distinctive life as human,—yet the Christian system exhibits a proof, the actual fact,



of supernaturalism, in the *condition* of his nature, whether as "a sinner" simply, or as "saved by grace."<sup>1</sup> *Sin*, whatever may be its essential nature or originative cause, is on the face of it supernatural in the sense at present in our question, of not natively belonging to the constitution of man, as truly as if it had been a physical poison, infused by a serpent into the nature of mankind. And though—as the Manichæans held—sin had belonged to the constitution of that nature, as distinguished from "*corruption*" of it or "*depraved*" condition of it,<sup>2</sup> yet—as even they maintained—there is a true supernaturalism or extranaturalism in redeeming grace. Forgiveness of sin can be only through sovereignly free action of the Ruler of the universe; and "a new heart," as in the promise of this religion, is no more in the course of simply physical nature than a rib is naturally capable of developing into a wife.

Having these things in remembrance, the present-day apologist may confront his especial question of miracle, as Knox went from the angry face of Queen Mary, "with a reasonable merrie countenance." When the objection to miracle as supernatural—the *only* objection of anti-supernaturalism as such—is found spreading itself over the whole system of things in the religion, it may at first sight appear as if the religion were threatened with universal annihilation. But in reality it is as when a thunder-cloud, whose lightning-bolts threatened to destroy a temple, becomes diffused through the whole atmosphere of the region. Then, as a power to destroy, it ceases to exist, and it becomes a part of the beneficent agency of the whole natural system of the land. When the objection to miracle as supernatural is found to be equally an objection to the providence, the saving grace, the living personality or veritable being of God, and also to the constitution of man as rational, his condition as sinful, his hope of salvation,—then, long before the finding is completed, the objection is destroyed,—excepting in the mind of atheists who hold that man is only a thing. And this, for the present—

<sup>1</sup> "A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE."—The inscription on the tombstone of Howard, the philanthropist, in a foreign land, in accordance with his dying request.

<sup>2</sup> *Confession of Faith.*

day apologist, is a very good introduction to the particular question of miracle in scriptural revelation.

*Hinc illæ lachrymæ* ("hence those tears"). The grief that stung naturalism into a great campaign of "higher criticism" for destruction of the Scriptures, was on account of their being a record of things miraculous or extraordinary supernatural. These witnesses could not be "suborned," but perhaps might—like Antipas—be "slain." If their testimony as to fact be credible, miracle is a fact unquestionable. So, *in that grand assault on religion, everything came to hinge on the credit of the Scriptures*, as containing a trustworthy account of the plain matters of *history* they record. And in order to discredit them as history, it was found necessary to make them infamous in their authorship—forgeries,—and to place the New Testament somewhere down the second century. For—*e.g.*—it was felt, and it still is true, that if, say, the Synoptical Gospels were published among Christians within living memory of the career of Jesus of Nazareth, then it will be impossible to deny the historical reality of the miracles of those Gospels without rejecting history in its recognised principles and methods of ascertainment. And then, the whole fabric of that "higher criticism," which was to rise as a Babel tower in place of Christian belief, would be found only a vanishing column of smoke: inasmuch as the supernaturalism, the supposed impossibility of which was the real foundation of that "criticism," is here shown to be a fact.

And here, too, the threatening thunder-cloud has now dissolved into a graciously refreshing rain. Not only in fact the grand assault against the Scriptures in question has failed,—"*is defeated along the whole line*" (*Cairns*); so that all the learning, ability, and unsparing labour expended on the warfare (cp. the siege of Troy) against those Scriptures, have left their credit unshaken, solidly established on the old foundation of scholarly historical judgment (*Non decem anni, non mille carinæ*). They have placed that foundation in a clearer light. And the credit that *thus* remains unshaken is necessarily strengthened by the failure to shake it; as Job's was, or as the reputation of a veteran pilot is raised by his now weathering all the storms of a new stormy season. In

his appeal to the common reason of mankind, the present-day apologist is entitled to maintain that the genuine apostolic authorship of the body of our New Testament Scriptures has received a *new demonstration*. And it is a further impressive fact, that *the grand critical endeavour to discredit them has brought to light nothing of any material consequence regarding them that was not known at the close of the second century*,—when visibly the community of Christians was settled in acceptance of them as an apostolic heritage of holy Scripture, acceptance that has continued on the part of that community through all the following centuries. Trial by fire is in such a case a precious thing (1 Pet. i. 7). And the present-day apologist is bound in reason to make full use of the corroboration which the credit of the Scriptures has received from that criticism, “intending murder and committing suicide.”

Regarding the question as to the Scriptures, it is important to observe that the matter has come to a point where mere technical scholarship, within reach of only a few, is no longer in command of the situation. It has reached the point at which, after the professional experts have given their testimony, there follows *the judgment* in the case; which here has to be a *jury* finding, of men who as a class are not professional experts. In this case the judge is not learned expertness—grammatical, or lexicographical, or antiquarian, but—*the common reason* of men simply as men—subject only to the reason or word (*logos* at John i. 1, 14) of God. That is to say, the question has come to an issue on *the reasonableness* of this or that view of the matter so far laid out for consideration. And relatively to the New Testament it is concentrated on the point as to *the character of Jesus and His career*:—What are we to think of *that*? What view<sup>1</sup> of it will fairly account for the plain facts of relative history? or be a real explanation of the historical appearance of the religion in Him and His career?

Previous to the recent grand assault this aspect of the matter had not come into due prominence. It is true<sup>2</sup> that recent “theories”—of Renan, Strauss, Baur—had been anticipated,—*e.g.* by English deists. Renan’s view of the

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *theory*.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 198.

career of Jesus as a self-delusive imposture (see Matt. xxvii. 63) could hardly fail to be represented even among the guesses of "vulgar infidelity." But some may be surprised to learn that the mythic theory of Strauss had been anticipated among those old unimaginative English. And to some it may be purely incredible that (in a supposed-to-be cracked brain) there was anticipation even of the bizarrerie at the culmination of Tübingen higher criticism,—in the "theory" (to account for forged New Testament Scriptures) of an abandonment of their original Christianity by the twelve apostles in favour of a Pauline innovation of doctrine which essentially changed the religion in its heart and soul. Still, those infidel predecessors of the "criticism" were not much occupied with such theorising,—about the question, *what* is the true view of the matter, if the received view be false? They gave themselves mainly to assailing the received view,—with objections which were so met at the time that their "curious books" lapsed out of memory among the peoples. And *the jury question* regarding Christ and His career, what, if not the received view, is the true view, thus has fallen to "criticism" in the "perilous times" of these "last days" (2 Tim. iii. 1–17).

*For the cause of truth*, it is a great advantage thus to have the matter brought to a clear issue. In his answer to a certain assault on the cause of freedom in the Church, Dr. Chalmers humorously complained that, while an army is made strong against assault by compact order, this pamphlet was impenetrably shielded against refutation by baffling disorderliness of its multifarious contents. And at first sight of the existing situation relatively to our subject, it might seem hopeless to endeavour to get in sight of any key of the position. A diligent student has found that of "theories" regarding the New Testament, which have risen out of the recent critical movement, there are one hundred and forty-four ( $=12 \times 12$ ; cp. Rev. vii.). And the sort of gossip that sometimes is publicly emitted under the name of speaking to the great question, as if everything hinged on the latest pamphlet (or telegram) about some new "theory"—groundswell of movement of which the storm is past—may thus be depressing to men desirous of real growth in knowledge



among mankind. But even in theorising there is a limit, beyond which "the force of invention can no further go." And theories already referred to will suffice for our present purpose,—to illustrate the advantage to the cause of truth that is to be expected from bringing the matter to a clear issue before the bar of reason.

*The Mythic Theory.*<sup>1</sup>—Strauss is one of the four who are named by Professor Huxley as leading typical representatives of the most advanced recent ascertainments in biblical scholarship. The professor's trustful readers may thus be painfully surprised to learn—in view of *his* professed specialty, namely, "weapons of precision"—that Strauss's distinctive contribution to ascertainment regarding Scripture was publicly abandoned by him as untenable thirty years ago,<sup>2</sup> before he finally broke with Christianity, after an abortive endeavour to get him intruded into a Zurich professorship of Christian theology. That is, the mythic theory, through his ventilation of which (A.D. 1835) it was that he came to have a name in the history of learning connected with the Bible,—*that theory has long ceased to have any place to make it worth considering except for illustration*; and what it illustrates is, the impossibility of

<sup>1</sup> Welsh, in the work referred to below, p. 307, when the mythical theorising was at its highest, spoke as follows:—

"It is not to be denied that Dr. Strauss has conducted his argument with great learning and ability. And in one respect he has rendered an important service to the cause of Christianity, by showing the utter untenableness of the Neologian system of scriptural interpretation, and thus, it is to be hoped, hastening its fall. The theory he proposes to substitute in its place is attended with so many difficulties, that, notwithstanding its temporary success, it must soon share the same fate. And in this way Dr. Strauss will be found indirectly to have promoted the cause he has sought to destroy. Next to the development of truth, it is desirable that the various forms of error should be fully illustrated; and by *elimination* it may at last be forced upon the most incredulous, that the only tenable theory respecting the origin of the Christian Church is, that its Founder was divine" (p. 164). Dr. Welsh's anticipation was completely verified. By historical process of "elimination," it is shown that there is *no real theory*, view, or explanation of the facts regarding Christianity which no one disputes, excepting the received Christian view, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. A corroborative "elimination," it may be believed, is at present in progress relatively to the Old Testament.

<sup>2</sup> *New Life of Jesus*, A.D. 1864.

giving any real view of the career of Jesus except the received Christian view, *unless* He be made sinful, untruthful, dishonest, in His personal character.<sup>1</sup>

Strauss *assumed* that miracle is absolutely impossible, so that the gospel history must needs be false. And he set himself to answer the question thus arising, If that history with its miracles be false, then what is or can be *the truth* regarding Jesus and His actual career,—the beginning of the world-filling fact of Christendom and the new true civilisation? He disdained a preceding fashion of the “vulgar rationalism,” explaining the miracles, which are essential in the gospel narratives, into mere imposture and gross delusion. He so explained as (he thought) to save the character of Jesus and His earliest followers by a “mythic” theory.<sup>2</sup> On that theory (= view), after the departure of Jesus, His followers,<sup>3</sup> brooding in a sort of day-dreaming on the memory of their hero, came to invest it with a glory of wonders like those of such Old Testament heroes as Moses and Elias; and in course of time these imaginings, without intention to deceive, settled and hardened into definite belief in miracles

<sup>1</sup> “It is painful to those who regard Christ and His apostles with the respect and reverence to which they are entitled, to state such a question, even in the explanation of an argument; but if the evidences of Christianity are to be discussed, we must fairly contemplate and describe the case and the position of those who deny its truth; and we are persuaded that it is of some practical importance, in order to our rightly comprehending this subject, and being duly impressed with it, that we should rightly conceive and fully realise what is necessarily implied in the denial, or even in the non-admission, of the truth of Christianity. If Christ and His apostles were not divinely commissioned teachers, they must have been either enthusiasts who imposed upon themselves, or impostors who endeavoured to impose upon others. This is the only alternative, and it is right and expedient that this consideration should be ever remembered and realised when considering the subject of the evidences of Christianity, for it contributes to preserve a right impression of what is the true nature of the question at issue, and of the momentous results that depend upon its decision; and it also renders us some assistance in forming a right estimate and a just impression of the force and bearing of the different arguments that may be brought forward on both sides of the question.”—Cunningham, at pp. 147, 148 of the work referred to above, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Mythos* is always the Greek for “fable” in our New Testament.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 77, etc.

of Jesus as historical realities. It was by this process (he represented) that the early Christians were prepared to receive such Gospels as *Matthew, Mark, Luke*,—which, of course, must have been written long after the time of the commonly supposed authors of them.

Nineteen years later, he had found that this view is not tenable: that the substance of history which cannot be got rid of in the career of Jesus cannot—*if His miracles be unreal*—be explained without more or less resorting to the old “vulgar rationalistic” supposition of imposture and gross delusion. He thus found that, even supposing the Synoptical Gospels to be spurious, he was not saved from the consequence he had apprehended as inevitable if they should be regarded as genuine works of Matthew, Mark, Luke,—namely, a necessity of owning that, according to recognised principles of historical ascertainment, the miracles they record must be accepted as historically real. For still, to explain the miracles away into *anything but* imposture or gross delusion would be, not to account for the origin of Christianity, but to refuse to account for it. Accordingly, at a later date<sup>1</sup> Strauss openly abandoned all connection with Christianity, deriding those who persisted in showing some respect for it, while not really believing it, as hypocrites or fools.<sup>2</sup>

But in this case, before any mythic theory can be entitled to a hearing, there is a previous question:—

*The Forgery Theory of Baur.*—He is another of Professor Huxley’s four shining pillars of testimony regarding most recent ascertainments of advanced biblical scholarship. And here, too, the professor’s “weapons of precision” are the opposite of shining and of sharp. *Baur’s distinctive contribution as a biblical scholar*, his theory regarding forgery of New Testament Scriptures, *is no longer owned by any school*. The Tübingen school, of which he was head-master, was virtually dissolved before his death a generation ago (A.D. 1860). At the time of which Professor Huxley’s information to his trustful readers may be a straggling tradition, Baur perhaps appeared to admiring pupils as if bestriding

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1872—*The Half and The Whole*.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. in curious coincidence, Cunningham, above, p. 195, footnote.

the world of biblical scholarship like a Colossus: now, in that world, he is no more a typical representative of recent ascertainments than if he had been the ancient Colossus of Rhodes.

He, like Strauss his pupil, *assumed* the absolute impossibility of miracles. This he did on the Hegelian pantheistic view, that in history there can be no real beginning, such as a miracle would involve; that in all seeming history there in fact is only an "absolute continuity" of evolutionary eventuation, as in the logical process of deductive reasoning,—with no such "gap" or break as would be constituted by intervention of a *will*, or existence of a personal free agent. *By this view he was avowedly determined in his so-called "historical criticism" of primeval Christianity and its records: so that what we have from him, under the name of biblical criticism, really is atheistic metaphysics masquerading as a student of the Bible and its history.*

In this relation he had one remarkable incoherence, which offended followers and perplexes every one. He held (see above) very strongly, down to the close of his life, that *the resurrection of Christ*, as an historical reality, was believed in as vitally fundamental by all Christians from the very outset at the time of the great Pentecost, and by Paul as a matter of which he had been an eye-witness on his persecuting way to Damascus. How that belief of theirs can be accounted for, if the crowning miracle of miracles was unreal, or how, if it was real, miracle can be impossible, and all history can be an absolute continuity of evolutionary eventuation without "gap" or break,—Baur did not explain, nor profess to be able to explain. But we pass from that incoherence to contemplation of his theory regarding forgery,—which is what now lies in our way.

The speciality of his theory was not, allegation of forgery. Forgery was alleged by Strauss, and is virtually alleged by every one who questions the apostolic authorship of the New Testament Scriptures. But Baur had said that, in order to account for the rise of Christianity as represented in the mythic theory, it is necessary to explain *how it was possible* for a forged New Testament Scripture to come into existence, and be received as genuine apostolic by the community of



Christians—as early, say, as A.D. 160? And his explanation was to the effect,—That a Pauline revolution of doctrine, changing the original nature of Christianity, came to have the upper hand in that community; that consequently there grew into its mind an essentially mistaken view of the original history of Christianity, which view embodied itself in our existing Scriptures, conformably to the revolutionary Pauline doctrine of the religion; so that the forged Scriptures, and the reception of them by Christians all over the world, are accounted for by operation of that mistaken view. *Q.E.D.* It now is needless, for working purposes of apologetics, to labour at discussion of the grounds and reasons of that theorising; which may be said to have died of daylight as soon as born, and to have been the death of the school which gave it birth. But *the fact, and the history*, of such theorising are well worth remembering and pondering.<sup>1</sup>

In order to its even appearing to have any look of plausibility, it was necessary to place the origination of the Scriptures in question far down in the second century,—say, as late as A.D. 160. But the result of renewed investigation thus occasioned has been to put that completely and finally out of the question. It now is for apologetics an easily demonstrable fact of literary history,<sup>2</sup> that the Scriptures in central question came into existence in the first century, and are the genuine works of apostles and their authorised associates. Hardly any scholar who knows the subject will—on grounds of literary judgment—place them later than toward the beginning of the second century. And it would be mere misexpenditure of energy to debate with an absolute Baurism about the question, How *could* the Christianity of the time after A.D. 160 flow out of a forgery perpetrated at that time? For it is a now settled fact of literary history, that at that time there was not and could not be a forgery of the Scriptures in question; inasmuch as the Scriptures in question existed long before that time.

<sup>1</sup> Regarding the Old Testament Scriptures and their history, *substantially the same view* is at present most in vogue among revolutionary critics (see further on).

<sup>2</sup> See the demonstration condensed—"Canon of New Testament Scripture"—in the present writer's work, *The Revelation and the Record*.

*Renan's view* brings the matter to a finally decisive point.—The citation of *names*, of what he reckons typical representative leaders, was by Professor Huxley intended to serve in place of *proof*, that, as he alleged, we have not trustworthy means of information regarding Christ and His teaching, so as—if He be of God—to be under obligation to believe in Him. That is to say, he in effect assured his readers that *he knows as a fact*, though it did not suit him to give proof of the fact beyond appealing to those names, that the Gospels are regarded as untrustworthy sources of information by those who really are the leaders of most advanced recent biblical scholarship. And that this is *precisely the opposite of reality* is shown by the one case of Renan,—more vividly than it could be shown by production of ten thousand names of Christian scholars against the professor's four.<sup>1</sup>

For many years after Baur and Strauss were antiquated in this relation, Renan (recently deceased) has been beyond comparison the leading representative of learned unbelief before the world. And he effectively *rejects their theorising* relatively to the Scriptures, and *admits the substantive trustworthiness* of the Gospels in their information regarding Christ and His teaching, to an extent that is quite sufficient for the working purposes of apologetics. Witness (at the cost of some repetition) the following—

NOTE of *Renan's admissions relatively to Scriptures*.—1. In common with the Tübingen theorists, he places as “unquestionably” Paul's own the four great theological Epistles—*Rom.*, 1 and 2 *Cor.*, *Gal.*—2. Discourses reported in *Matthew* he acknowledges to be self-evidently Christ's own, because no other *can* have spoken them,—they are thus unique.—3. In *Mark*, he says, we may well see for substance reproduced the testimony of an eye-witness, a personal follower of Christ, who watched Him with eyes of love,—no doubt, the Apostle Peter.—4. In *the third Gospel*, and also for substance in *Acts*, he is willing to see the genuine work of Paul's companion Luke.—There is no need of going further with this witness. *Here already is*,

<sup>1</sup> The remaining two—in addition to Baur and Strauss—are, Volkmar, an extremist who represents no school, and Reuss, who, though revolutionary in his views regarding the Old Testament, was steadily an opponent of the Tübingen theorising about New Testament history. On what *principle* are these four selected? Is it merely their happening to be recollected as destructive critics?

in ample sufficiency, regarding means of trustworthy information about Christ and primeval Christianity, *concession of all that an apologist needs to care for.*

The field thus is completely clear for the question, *What view is to be taken of this matter, if not, that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God"?* What story have *you* to put in place of the received Christian view of the matter?<sup>1</sup> Here "learned unbelief" itself, in the person of its latest world-renowned coryphæus, puts *the matter of fact reality of the history*, sufficiently for the Christian advocate, beyond dispute. And the specialty of Renan's own theory is not, his making Christ a deluded impostor (cp. 2 Tim. iii. 13), but his making Him a disreputable Frenchman. The imposture theory is old commonplace of "vulgar infidelity." The new specialty of the "brilliant scholar" is, his having, under some disguise of sentimental rhetorical glitter, propounded that view in substance with unexampled shamefulness in detailed modifications, such as to make his "Jesus" a hero of cheap French romance,—who begins with being a sensuous imaginative enthusiast, goes on to be a deliberately systematic "deceiver" (cp. Matt. xxvii. 63) in the name of God, and ends with suicide, in the desperation of disappointed vain ambition! *That view is the alternative now remaining to those who do not embrace the Christian view.*

The revulsion of ordinarily clean-hearted unbelievers from that infamy of representation is no doubt sincere. But<sup>2</sup> the interest of truth demands the question, whether the revulsion is *warrantable* on their part? Is there, in reality of reason, any alternative but, *either the Christ of Renan or the Christ of Christendom?* The representation, for instance, of the raising of Lazarus as a mock resurrection, in which Jesus and His disciples were conspirators along with the Bethany family,—was in a measure withdrawn by the French infidel apostate himself. But the essential baseness of his conception of the real inward character of Christ and His career,—was *that* withdrawn? *If it be not a fact that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead*, then *what* is the true representation of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. with what follows, pp. 57–66 above, and p. 257, etc., below, the whole treatment of the Old Testament question.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 226, footnote.

the matter? While, if it be a fact, He must needs (Rom. i. 4) be "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed" (Mark xiv. 61); if it be not a fact, He must have been a "deceiver" (Matt. xxvii. 63) on that occasion: if not personally participant in originating the fraudulent conspiracy, yet ploughing with its heifer—allowing it to be supposed He brought the dead back to life, and taking advantage of the mistaken supposition for the support of a false claim of His to be the Saviour Son of the Highest. Can any modification of Renan's original picture make any real abatement of the infamous criminality that would be involved in the substance of that fraud? And if such was the character of the action of Jesus on this occasion, at the culminating crisis of His career, can any mere modification, arising out of the moral and spiritual character of a critic, blacken the darkness of wickedness that must have been at the heart of that career all through? Here the appeal is to the reason of all men who are simply sane.

Mr. Mill is no doubt sincere in his expressed admiration of the moral teaching and example of Jesus. Even an *Ecce Homo* might not be consciously false in its eulogistic declamation. But, *in reason*, are men entitled to stop short at such half-ways? Suppose that Jesus, below the surface, behind the veil of that so admired and lauded life and speech, had in Him the hollow rotten heart of a lie so hideous as would be involved in His not really being the divine Christ. Then surely the philosophical admiration and the declamatory laudation are worse than wasted, on a *mere surface* of excellence, that conceals a reality immeasurably worse than all the "whited sepulchres" represented by His Pharisee in the temple, "inwardly full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness." Is *this* the morality for which all that homage is intended? It is the morality of a Jesus who is not Redeemer in His office and Immanuel in His person. And perhaps it is well that one man has been permitted to speak out, from "the imagination of the thoughts of his heart," in relation to this matter, *what underlies the surface of every view but one*.

The Christ of Christendom, or the Christ of Renan? To this alternative the matter has come simply through impulsive direction given to inquiry by the critical assault. Not only the assault has made the trustworthiness of gospel history



clearer than before, it has compelled attention to the *alternative*, with reference to "Jesus of Nazareth" (see Acts ii. 22, x. 38), which is the great matter of question raised for all men: Is He, on the one hand, a Saviour to be worshipped? or, on the other hand, was He a "deceiver" to be abhorred (Matt. xxvi. 67)? All through His career before men,—especially in the culmination of His course of witness-bearing on behalf of God (Matt. xxvi. 63–66; cp. John xix. 7), above all, "before Pontius Pilate" and on the cross (John xviii. 37; Matt. xxvii. 46), and (Luke xxiii. 46) supremely in that last cry, in which He commended His Spirit unto God as His Father, after having brought Himself to this death by a whole career of claiming to be the Son of God,—"*Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?*" (Mark xiv. 61) is the one real question now, as it was when He answered it with utmost conceivable solemnity of an oath.

And still the only real answer is: Either the adorable Christ of Christendom, or the abominable Christ of the French infidel apostate. *History*, as tried again in the fires of a long campaign of criticism searching and unsparing, leaves no other choice. The Christ of eulogistic eloquence and of commendatory philosophising, who is *only* a model teacher and man, who does not, in and through all and above all, claim to be a divine Redeemer,—*that* Christ is not an (*ens rationis*) object of reason: He has no existence in historical reality; but is a mere figment of theorising imagination. To speak of *him* as the historical Christ of the Gospels, or as standing in any creative relation to the historical Christianity, is to sink into delusiveness of "cunningly devised fables" (Greek, *sophisticated myths*, 2 Pet. i. 16),—essentially more *irrational* than the superstition of a peasant who adores the "Bambino" Christ he has made, for he at least *thinks of* Jesus as the Son of God.

Ascertainment thus far with reference to the New Testament will throw light on other matters, *e.g.* regarding the *Old Testament*, as to which see the following section (4); and also regarding the *New Testament* itself, on which we now observe as follows:—

Generally, "oppositions" may be expected, and can have

their use—like storms. If Strauss abandon his mythic theory as untenable, and the Tübingen theory of a forged New Testament die of exposure to daylight, a Renan will arise, rejecting *those* theories, but erecting another No-God altar on the same ultimate foundation of mere naturalism. And if *his* “theory,” or view, of the character and career of Jesus perish through its revoltingness to common good feeling and good sense, in the meantime a special pleader (*Supernatural Religion*)<sup>1</sup> will fill three volumes with negativism of a “historical criticism” whose dominant principle of procedure may appear to be, to assail the received Christian view and its advocacy, on every ground of argument found accessible, with every sort of missile that may be ready to hand. Yet again, if this amateur “scholar” succumb to such masters as Lightfoot and Sanday,<sup>2</sup> an infidel female novelist will take the field; showing how a Christian minister became an infidel, and set on foot a Christianity of denying Christ the Lord, and made a similar infidel of his erst Puritan Christian wife,—all on no apparent ground of reason but what has been described as “a farrago of scraps of after-dinner conversation of bookish people of a

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lightfoot (articles in the *Contemporary Review*, republished in a volume, *Essays on Supernatural Religion*) terribly exposed his unprincipled misrepresentation of Christian writers, his ignorance (of Greek) where he parades full accurate knowledge. For instance, at one place this writer has a great array of reference to authorities, filling the page, and fitted to produce on “the simple” mind of reviewers a deep impression of his laborious conscientious completeness in mastery of recondite literature of the subject in hand. But it is proved by internal evidence that this elaborate “Note” must in fact have been *borrowed* for show. The references are in large measure wide of his point, and otherwise the authorities referred to are more or less opposed to his view of the point. The borrower even seems unaware that the Latin “Cocus” of the borrowed note is his own compatriot English Mr. Cook.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gospels in the Second Century*.—A real original study of the “use” of the Gospels in the sub-apostolic age, which touches the very nerve of apologetic argument relatively to the canon of New Testament Scripture and authenticity of gospel history. For this argument it makes a contribution of unique value in its inductive proof, that a certain unhampered freedom, or seeming looseness, in the manner of the appearance of traces of the Gospels in the Christian literature of that age is identically the same as exists in the manner of the appearance of traces of the Old Testament in the New. The author of *Supernatural Religion* went on reprinting what he owned as *errors* proved by Dr. Sanday!

loose way of thinking about religion,"—certainly with no appearance of answer to the real question, as the matter stands, on *your* view: What are we to think of *Jesus* claiming to be the Saviour Son of God?

Though real discussion should thus apparently have run to seed, it may be well to learn from recent representations how the most important matters can be contemplated and handled by active-minded persons who really do not understand them (Jude, 10). It may serve to show what abysses of really ignorant incomprehension there can be (Isa. i. 3), under a surface of sceptical knowingness wielding "weapons of precision," in assault (Ps. ii. 4) on "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture." And the emptiest "wind" of opposition may usefully guide attention to particular points in the system of defence. Thus,—

1. *The vital issue does not depend on details of Scripture utterance*; but only on the main plain substance of Scripture fact: which it might be possible to establish without aid of Scripture testimony (cp. the outline of the career of Jesus from Origen's quotations of Celsus),—though it would be worse than silly—sinful—not to make use of that aid since we have it, as if an eagle should not use its wings for soaring to a mountain-top because it is able to walk.

2. Regarding *Scriptures of minor importance*.<sup>1</sup> If the main body of Scriptures be shown to be genuine beyond reasonable doubt, then it is unreasonable to be anxiously solicitous about questions remaining over in connection with some Scriptures; and there may be no real *apologetic* interest, of the being of Christian faith, dependent on these questions, though they should have an interest in connection with "comfort of the Scriptures" (Rom. xv. 4), or completed well-being of that faith.

Suppose, *e.g.*, that after all the recent expiscations a shade or cloud of uncertainty regarding apostolic authorship remains on 2 and 3 *John*, 2 *Peter*, *James*, *Jude*. That places us as—so far as was known to Eusebius in the fourth century—the community of Christians were placed at the close of the second century. For them there similarly was a cloud or haze in connection with those same minor Epistles. But

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 20.

there was cloudless light, full certainty, relatively to the genuine apostolicity of *the four Gospels, Acts, the thirteen Pauline Epistles*, along with *Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 John, Revelation*. And these contain everything that any one thinks of the least consequence regarding the primeval Christian history and doctrine: regarding that there is nothing in those minor Epistles that is not contained in that main body of Scriptures on which there is no haze or cloud; so that we would have known it on apostolic authority, though the minor Epistles had never existed or were known to be forgeries.

The special providence which Christian piety<sup>1</sup> sees in such preservation of the Scriptures, has surely been "good" toward mankind needing this "balm in Gilead." It is truly "to be admired of" those who see God in history. To say that it amply suffices for working purposes of apologetics is only to confess one small part of our obligation to thankfulness on account of that preservation, unique as it is in the literary history of mankind.<sup>2</sup>

3. *Concessions by unbelievers* who are acquainted with the subject and capable of judging. These have a value in respect of serviceableness for disproof of unbelief all round,—arrows from its own quiver; but also may be, positively, testimonies for the religion disbelieved. For instance,—the genuineness of discourses of Christ in *Matthew*,—*Mark's* being evidently in substance the story of an eye-witness, doubtless the Apostle Peter,—and *Luke's* being presumably the author of *the third Gospel* and of *Acts* for substance. These things, acknowledged by Renan, place us, not only with Paul, at Rome A.D. 62, and in his previous apostolic labours, but at the great Pentecost, listening to the original eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses through Peter their spokesman; and leave us, *in reason*, only the alternative of either going with the three thousand and the five thousand Jerusalem converts, or joining the enemies of Christ, who procured His judicial murder through suborned

<sup>1</sup> *Confession of Faith*.

<sup>2</sup> The corroborative testimonies of Egyptian and Assyrian discoveries (see sec. 4 below) relatively to the Old Testament, are paralleled by testimonies relatively to the New Testament in recent recovery of long-lost writings of the early-primitive Church time,—*e.g.*, within this last decade, "*The Teaching*" of the Apostles, Tatian's *Diatessaron*, and the *Apology* of Aristides.



false witness: since the worst *they* had to say against Him was, that He was a "deceiver," particularly (John xix. 7) worthy of death, "because He made Himself the Son of God."

Again, as to the *four great theological Epistles*, the acknowledgment of their unquestionable "Pauline authorship,"—by Renan, by the Tübingen school, by unbelieving critics generally. That, *in reason*, is to the theorising and the disbelief explosive dynamite inside of a house of cards. For these four Epistles are day-clear proof of the following historical facts:<sup>1</sup>—1. That a Christian Church, founded in belief on Jesus as the Messiah Son of God, existed in representative regions of "the whole world" of Roman empire within a quarter of a century of His crucifixion, and had so existed for a considerable number of years.<sup>2</sup>—2. That the Pauline "gospel"—of free salvation for all mankind sinners, by faith, not by works, as the gift of divine redeeming love, in a divinely glorious Christ—was the doctrine of the Church from the beginning, as founded by apostles who had been "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word."<sup>3</sup>—And 3. At the time of this writing, Christians universally believed in *apostolic* miracles, the credential attestation of the Twelve and of Paul as throned witnesses of God in Christ, "to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

How, then, could these Christians—as (the original) Strauss alleged they would—have insuperable difficulty in receiving *Matthew, Mark, Luke*, on account of miracles ascribed in these Gospels to the Lord? How could Paul's "gospel"—as Baur alleged—be "another gospel, essentially different from, fundamentally subversive of, that which the Twelve had originally delivered as from the Lord? And if—as Renan and others have alleged—there be "no supernatural," then how (*i.e. on anti-supernaturalist principles*) are we to account

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Professor Huxley, *ut supra*.

<sup>2</sup> In articles in *The Expositor*, vol. ii., Second Series, Dr. Matheson shows, from incidental indications in *these Epistles*, that the Christians of that time, before our Gospels were written, must have been familiar with the history narrated in these Gospels as we have them.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Matheson points out the fact, that at the early time of the *four Epistles* there were in the Church's mind those theological "ideas" which negative criticism has made a testing proof of *lateness* in the origination of Scriptures!

for the apostolic testimony regarding miracles of Jesus, above all, the stupendous miracle of His resurrection?—for the universal belief of Christians in apostolic miracles, *e.g.*, at the so recent founding of Christianity (Rom. xv. 18, 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; cp. Heb. ii. 4)?—yea, and for the existence of that “immovable kingdom,” “planted in the sea” of a world that lay in wickedness?

Did the original apostles conspire with Paul against Christ for subversion of their own original “gospel,” declaring it accursed of God? (Gal. i. 8). Did the converts everywhere conspire with apostles in lying about miracles, at the peril (1 Cor. xv. 19) of all that is worth caring about in this world and (see ver. 15) the next?—all on account of a young deluded impostor of the labouring class in Galilee, whose brief career closed in infamous death-punishment at the hand of the public authorities at Jerusalem, in sight of the Jewish nation, within that generation, in memory of half mankind yet alive,—including not a few influential Palestinians who, with connections all over the world, would go to any extreme, even murder, to *prove* those miracles untrue! If not, then is there, can there be, *any* real “theory,” view, explanation of the plain facts established by those four “unquestionable” Epistles, *excepting* the view or “theory” of a professed “eye-witness and minister of the word from the beginning” (*John* xx. 31), “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (cp. 1 *John* i. 1–3)?<sup>1</sup>

SEC. 4 (*Supplementary*) *Latest Phase* of the recent movement—  
*The Old Testament Question.*

The designation “conservative” is not a heavy burden for disciples of Him who says (Rev. iii. 11), “Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Nor is “progressive” necessarily eulogistic. There is a progress (2 *Tim.* iii. 13) of “evil men and seducers” (*gōetæ*—conjuring quacks) from bad to worse, which (Ps. i. 4), *in relation to the Old Testament*, may be “like the chaff which the wind driveth away.” But (vers. 2,

<sup>1</sup> See *Peter's* view at Mark i. 1, cp. 2 *Pet.* i. 16; *Matthew's*, Matt. i. 1, 22, xxviii. 18–20; and *Luke's*, Luke i. 35, xxiv. 46, Acts i. 1–8.

3) there also is a blessed progress of the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord. And, while (Col. ii. 8) there may be a conservative traditionalism in atheistic naturalism of Epicurus or of Zeno, the great Puritan divine John Owen says, "He *does* not serve God in his generation who *will* not go beyond the line of predecessors."

The Reformation was a great *forward* movement: as also was the entrance of "the gospel of the kingdom" into the heathen Roman empire, and as had been its previous going down to Israel in Egypt. But<sup>1</sup> the Gassendi-Epicurism of Pascal's day was not a progress from what had "encountered" Paul at Athens, but a regress to that heathenism from Christian civilisation; as it now is when it speaks through a falsely so-called "scientism," in the old speech-bewraying manner of "what will this babbler say?" And in the eighteenth century the sensationalism of Christians of the type of Locke<sup>2</sup> was a symptom of their being on the way to fatal shallows, even in philosophy, from the earlier depth and comprehensiveness of such as Cudworth, yea, and as deistical Herbert of Cherbury.<sup>3</sup> And even the naturalism, which was the impulsive and regulative principle in the recent grand assault on Christianity, had in it a wholesomeness of emancipation from the baser naturalism into which philosophy had sunk.

It can hardly be believed that a few years ago a really able man, such as Comte was, imagined that a crass Epicurism, to which he and others gave the *name* of "philosophy," was about to be accepted by mankind as at last the true *Eureka* evangel of its hope. Some still, no doubt, who may justly be deemed philosophers, avowedly see no other hope for mankind, though that hope on their part may seem to be only a sort of desperation in expecting what they really do not look for (see 1 Cor. i. 21; cp. 1 Pet. i. 3-12). But those Teutonic peoples among whom the Reformation Christianity came to be most deeply and widely rooted, and which now have apparently

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 210, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "Locke held thoroughly unsound and erroneous views in regard to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel."—Cunningham, at p. 266 of the work referred to above, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> In his philosophical ground-principles, he anticipated what is distinctive in the "critical" philosophy of Kantism.

attained to the leadership of civilisation in the world,—they, notwithstanding deep and widespread worldliness of heart and life, have not anchored their hope behind the veil of what has been called “the dirt philosophy,” looking for a materialistic-Epicurean age of gold.

Before the Comptian positivism there had arisen, not only in France (Cousin, etc.), but still more in Germany and among the English-speaking peoples, a far-reaching revival of *philosophy* in the true sense: in comparison with which the more recent resuscitation of materialistic naturalism among those peoples, as an exercise of reason, pales into insignificance. The philosophy, though, as has appeared, naturalistic in its heart (witness, in places, its running into pantheism), yet in complexion was prevalently spiritualistic, in a strong antagonism to materialistic sensationalism,<sup>1</sup> from which it had originally been a recoil.<sup>2</sup> Retaining the colour of that revulsion, it continued to be in aspect distinctively idealising, soaring, transcendental,—a philosophy akin to what of nobleness there had been in ancient schools.

In Germany alone it was, from Leibnitz to Hegel, illustrated by a series of masters not equalled in intellectual greatness by any other series in the philosophical history of mankind. Jacobi's divination, of a fatal misdirection in its tendency, of empty idealism towards pantheism, has been justified by the event. But the speculative loftiness of its aim, and its comprehensive thoroughness of intellectual process, served to theology, which had shrunk into a surpliced naturalism, both as a wholesome tonic and as a preparatory discipline for Christian thought, in particular training her into a depth and breadth and clearness of view, which did good service in the then impending warfare of apologetics,—as Israel was trained in the wilderness for future conquest of the promised land of rest.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 207, etc.

<sup>2</sup> “Philosophy” (lit. *love of wisdom*) in the true sense looks toward principles and ideas, imperial and universal, while *mere* “scientism” only peers into physical processes of necessary eventuation. A man of science may be a philosopher, as a parishioner may be a statesman or a grocer a poet. But a *mere* “scientist” with “a little philosophy” (*Bacon*) is a jackdaw with one or more peacock's feathers in its tail.



Theology<sup>1</sup> had need of purification, though it should be by earthly fire. When a leading public witness for Christianity could speak of original sin as a *literal* poisoning of man's nature (cp. John i. 13), there was work for a real philosophy thoroughly trenchant as Kantism, were it only in clearing the theological atmosphere of deleterious fog. Isaac Taylor (*Fanaticism*) has a suggestion, that perhaps the sweeping monotheism of the Califs was for mankind an improvement on the rotten Christianity that had come to occupy regions where the kingdom of God was originally planted by apostles. And for the true Israel the doleful heavy labours of Egypt, and Sinaitic reverses and other trials, are an education for enjoyment as well as for conquest of Canaan. But, through its underlying naturalism, the new philosophy worked inward in corrupting the substance of Christianity and undermining its authority. This was reflected in Coleridge and his school,<sup>2</sup> where the philosophy wore an aspect of ambitious loftiness passing into docile wisdom of discipleship. The loftiness of the speculation had an attraction for sincere discipleship, through its appearing to place philosophy in accord with universal aspects of Christian revelation; so that Edward Irving could sit at the feet of Coleridge, perhaps reading his own interpretations into the philosopher-poet's dreams. It thus might happen that an essentially naturalistic metaphysic should, in clouds of mystical transcendentalism, be mistaken for a "child of the Highest." The disguised hollowness of a pantheistic theorising has (Col. ii. 8) a dangerous facility of self-accommodation in forms of expression to the positively Christian supernaturalism of conception and belief.

In fact the theorising of what in its essence is only a heathenish theosophy,—that excludes both living personality in God and responsible free agency in man,—came to be to such effect infused into Christian "forms of sound words," that ("without observation") a really heathenish petrification came to be in place of the evangelical tree of knowledge of saving truth. And in this way an appearance of Christian teaching in form of words came to be the disguising medium of spreading an evasive *exclusion* of the gospel in substance from the system of men's thought and life, and putting in

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 196.

place of it a doctrine or view, whose antagonism to evangelical Christianity is the most profoundly comprehensive that can be imagined. Thus in the land of Luther, mother-land of Reformation evangelism, an atheistic metaphysic has within recent memory domineered in professedly Christian schools of learning. Under nominally Christian State-patronage, it expounded *itself* through the most sacred Christian words, in a mystification that was infamous mockery rather than a real disguising. And in professedly evangelical circles and communities a welcome is given to a shallow flimsy naturalism, *because*, "paltering in a double sense," it *speaks* the heathenism in the consecrated "language of Canaan" (Jer. vi. 13, 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1-4).

That worldliness, in a progress that is natural to it, fatally tends toward antagonism to the gospel from which it is a departure (1 John ii. 19). Natively, the case is one of, "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad" (Matt. xii. 30). Consequently, there may always be need of apologetics, were it only (Matt. xxiv. 24) for self-defence of Christianity against the sap and mine of a professedly Christian teaching of mere naturalism or worldliness (Acts xx. 28-30). In the meantime, there continue to be evasions more or less insidious, *which as a class are characterised by tendency to disparagement if not rejection of the Old Testament.*

"The Old Testament question" is by many felt as being, relatively to apologetics, distinctively the burning question at this hour. It is with a leading reference to the apologetic situation as affected by that question, that we now will endeavour to obtain some light from the smoke of controversy in connection with it. In particular, we will look at the matter with an eye to the previous question, whether the subject is one only for specialists expert in technical scholarship? or whether it is not open for judgment by the common reason of mankind?—a question vitally affecting in this relation the great interest of the freedom of the human soul.

The present Old Testament question hinges on the *pentateuchal* constitution of Israel: it is found that a man's view regarding that will operate as a—true or false—"great light" (Gen. i. 3, 16), guiding and controlling his construc-

tion of the Old Testament as a whole. And regarding that constitution the root question is as to the *religious institutions* appearing in the last four books of Moses;—*e.g.*, are they really Mosaic, and in what sense? did they originate in the Mosaic age, in such finality of completeness, as through the following ages to have been “the law” (John i. 17), the rounded Israelitish constitution;—such that of legislation strictly speaking there afterwards was nothing, even under the kings (unless 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25 be an exception), and the only considerable post-Mosaic ordinance was that of the temple service of song? That they did, is the “received” view, which has been held by substantially the whole community of believers in Bible religion upon earth as far back as the matter can be traced, from long before the closing of the Old Testament canon of Scripture.

Along with this view as to the institutions, it is a similarly received view as to the pentateuchal *Scriptures* in our hands, that they too originated in the Mosaic age,—with allowance for subsequent editorial revision, but not such revision as would violate their character of primeval authorship;—and that, if not written literally with the great Legislator’s own hand, they yet so proceeded from Him that Moses was their author (John v. 46). But some adherents of the received view as to the institutions hold what, for convenience of distinct exposition, we will speak of as a “half-way” view: *e.g.*, that the pentateuchal *Scriptures* now existing are more or less of post-Mosaic authorship; or, again, as to the institutions, that what completeness they had in the Mosaic age was only the completeness which a tree has in the newly-planted seed,—while what we now see in the Pentateuch is the tree in its fully-unfolded manifestation, such as it came to be, in historical reality of existence, only through a process of growth or evolution in the course of ages after the Mosaic.

To us endeavouring to see the apologetic situation, the existence of a half-way view creates a difficulty of complication as in Captain Marryat’s triangular duel. It presents on the one hand a face of opposition toward the received view, while on the other hand it opposes what we will call the “destructive” criticism.<sup>1</sup> It thus is exposed to fires of

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note A.

antagonism from opposite sides, like the ancient Britons lamenting, "The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea throws us back on the barbarians."<sup>1</sup> Relatively to apologetics, the proper direct antagonist to the received Christian view is, the destructive criticism: to which accordingly our attention will in the present section be mainly directed. But a passing note at the present stage on the relation of the half-way view to the matter may facilitate our exercise on that criticism, by helping to clear the air and show how the land lies.

Adherents of the half-way view profess to hold by that *supernaturalism*, in the origination of the Israelitish constitution, which here is the fundamental matter in controversy of Bible religion with the destructive criticism; that is, to believe that the institutions were a special creation by expressly declared will of God: though the creation, primarily and germinally at the hand of Moses, was thereafter, in the Mosaic seed's unfolding into tree, completed by other divinely moved and commissioned ministers of that will,—*e.g.* "the prophets." On this view, though the constitution in its Mosaic stages should have received augmentations from without,—such that its expansion was thus far not as a tree's growing, but as the swelling of a stream through tributary rains,—still, these accessions could be from heaven, in revelation of God. And on behalf of the view it is pleaded, that the so far abandonment of the old received view, about a primeval origination of the institutions in a finally manifested completeness,—as of a fruit-bearing tree,—is an advantage to the defence of Bible religion; as being an abandonment of no longer tenable outworks of the religion or its book, which might be turned against it.

Here it will serve an ulterior purpose of our exercise to

<sup>1</sup> An evil hence arising to the interest of truth is, interference with due Christian freedom in characterising the destructive criticism, through half-way theorists imagining that of course the characterisation is intended for *them*. Nevertheless, truth has to be defended by free speech, with a *detur dignori* of, "Let him wear the cap who finds it fitting him." If a man maintain positions of the destructive criticism, he will be smitten with arrows aimed at what he shields; and in battle for Israel's life Jonathan will aim at the Philistines, though the arrow's path should not be over David's head but through his heart.



pause upon the fact, that *an evolution*<sup>1</sup> of the Israelitish constitution, as from planted seed into fruit-bearing tree, *had place on the received view*.<sup>2</sup> This appears in the pentateuchal representation of "the three Codes," as follows:—

1. "The Jehovist Code." In *The Book of the Covenant*, at Ex. xx.–xxiv. (see also Ex. xxxiv.), there appears Israel's earliest exodus condition, previous to the erection of the tabernacle, and the constitution is seen in outlined rudimentary formation.—2. "The Priest Code," at Ex. xxv. and on to the close of *Numbers* xxxvi. Here, within the area so outlined, and on that foundation of covenant with Jehovah, the constitution rises into a completed ceremonialism of Levitical institutions, around the tabernacle as their sun: where the principle, referred to at the original founding (Ex. xx. 24—R.V.), that the place for altar sacrifice shall be that which Jehovah chooses to put His name there (cp. Deut. xii. 5, etc.), is distinctly applied in restriction of sacrifice to the central sanctuary now erected, —*that* being now the place wherein He has "put His name" (by theophany and through prophetic intimation).—3. "The Deuteronomic Code"—in *Deuteronomy*—at the close of the wandering, when the great human leader is about to be parted from his Israel. This parting address is as it were at once a dying testimony and (cp. Acts i. 3) a mediatorial testament. We see in it a recapitulation of the constitution previously existing. With only some needed allusions to the Levitical institutions,—already sufficiently expounded for the priests, whom they mainly concern,—what Moses here dwells on are the things which concern the nation generally, in its common life: introducing modifications of the system of the laws—by

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note L.

<sup>2</sup> Even on the full received view of the Mosaic age, there is a true institutional evolution within that age itself: from (1) the germinal constitution in *The Book of the Covenant*, into (2) the ceremonial system of the Priest Code, and thence on to (3) the recapitulatory completion in the Deuteronomic laws. Here, while there is additional revelation at stages (2) and (3),—as a stream receives tributary "gracious rains" from heaven, —*that* supernaturalism of revelation and redemption, which constitutes the essentially distinctive, or distinctively essential, nature of the history, is the same all through the stages. And as for *time*,—The changes in form (of this umbrella plant) *can*, so far as we know, have taken place in the well-marked periods of the forty years—(1) the inaugural *annus mirabilis*, (2) the long wandering, (3) the pause before crossing the Jordan as well as it could in the vast æons imagined by the destructive criticism: whose changes after all are not "uniformitarianly" gradual, but highly and violently, if not absurdly, "catastrophic."

addition, subtraction, adjustment—suitably to the changed condition and prospects of the nation, now in transition from the wilderness to Canaan; with earnest appeals to the spiritual principles, of heart religion, which in the constitution are the living soul.

Here, on the face of the matter, is a *real evolution*, embracing the whole constitutional history. Consequently the half-way view, if it speak of an historically unfolding growth of the constitution, does not in so speaking necessarily differ from the full received view except in reference to the *time* of the evolution: the received view placing it all within the Mosaic age, while the half-way view extends it through generations following,—it may be, a thousand years.<sup>1</sup>

Of course it is necessary for those who hold this view as to the institutions, to hold also that the pentateuchal Scriptures, exhibiting the institutions in their final completeness, are of post-Mosaic origin. Some adherents of the view own that it necessitates departure from the hitherto received doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures, their divinity of authorship; while others are found protesting that in their theorising the inspiration doctrine is not abandoned but presupposed.<sup>2</sup> Adherents of the full received view object to the half-way view as not compatible with belief in the *historical truth* of the Scriptures,<sup>3</sup> which place that complete historical constitution in the Mosaic age, and also ostensibly place the pentateuchal Scriptures in that age. What is represented as an apologetically advantageous abandonment of indefensible outworks, they deprecate<sup>4</sup> as really being an opening of a door through which the enemy can come in as a flood, a concession of *principle*—to aggressive rationalism—which is a

<sup>1</sup> There is here no question of the fact of those being three distinct codes, varying in form and in character correspondingly to their respective purposes or occasions. The question of criticism here is, whether they so vary that they must have been framed in widely separate ages of Israel's history.

<sup>2</sup> So Canon Driver, *Introduction* (Preface). But in *The Contemporary Review* (Feb. 1890), he said, "It would seem that current views of inspiration need some modification and revision." That is, *if*, as he strove to show, the Scriptures are not free from error as to fact, but set forth as historical fact some things really untrue.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix, Note on "Dr. Robertson."

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix, Notes A, K, I, and on "Principal Cave."

down-slide, with no rationally consistent termination short of naturalistic abandonment of revelation altogether. And in particular, with reference to inspiration, they are found remonstrating in the following strain:—

The *sincerity* of such protestation, about adherence to the inspiration doctrine, is not a matter in question. The question for us, with reference to supernatural religion in the Bible, is not, what a man may sincerely *believe* to be the bearing of the half-way view on inspiration; but—a thing quite independent of his belief—what is *the fact* as to that bearing? Is the half-way view *logically consistent* with belief in real divine inspiration of Scripture? Suppose, for instance, that a critic, who prefaces with protesting about inspiration as aforesaid, goes on to make the Scriptures *unhistorical* in narrative representations as to fact. *What sort* of “inspiration” is that,<sup>1</sup> under whose influence a sacred writer narrates as history what is untrue (2 Pet. i. 16)? Can it proceed from the divine “Spirit of truth” (John xiv. 17, 26), the “holy Spirit” of God (2 Pet. i. 19–21)? Is not such unveracity, in a book professedly oracular (Rom. iii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 11), suggestive rather (John viii. 46; cp. Gen. iii. 1–5) of a very different kind or source of influence, which perhaps may operate in heathen oracles?

Now, concentrating our attention on the bearing of *the destructive criticism* on apologetics, we begin with clearing away clouds of confusion, *e.g.*, in relative use of words,—which (*Bacon*) are the counters of wise men and the money of fools. Sometimes a mere hash of opinions, adverse to the Bible and its religion, is served up as an exposition of “The Higher Criticism.” And not unfrequently it might appear to be thought that “criticism” is a new invention of deep scholars for discovery of hidden things regarding Scripture, and “higher criticism,” in ascertainments or in methods, a consummate fruit of that invention. Hence the following—

NOTE *on use of words*.—Criticism, higher criticism, is at least as old and widespread as real study of the Bible: so that it is to be hoped we all are more or less critics, yea, higher

<sup>1</sup> “Such scholars would do an invaluable service to the Church at the present time, if they would explain what they mean by inspiration in this connection, and define wherein their position differs from that of the critics who profess no such reverence for the Old Testament.”—Robertson, *Early Religion of Israel*, with immediate reference to Dr. Driver’s protestation.

critics; although—like the man who spoke prose—we may not be aware of it. “Criticise” (*e.g.* at 1 Cor. ii. 15, x. 15) is Greek for *judge*. Biblical criticism thus is judgment regarding Scripture. The *lower* criticism (Eichhorn) is judgment regarding the outward form of Scripture, its text or letter: what are the books entitled to rank in its canon, and what the words and sentences that genuinely go to make those books? While *higher* criticism is judgment regarding the inward substance and history of Scripture on the ground of what Scripture itself contains.<sup>1</sup> If the judgment be opposed to the claim of Scripture and its religion to be of God, the criticism is “destructive”; and it is “revolutionary” if the judgment be opposed to received Christian views of Scripture and its contents. On the other hand, it is “conservative” if the judgment be favourable to these views, and “constructive” if the judgment be favourable to that claim.

*Traditional* means that this or that is “received” in a community from the past: *e.g.* (Col. ii. 8) un-Christian opinions,

<sup>1</sup> The following is *historical* definition from a common-sense point of view. Its immediate reference is to a certain German handling of the Old Testament previously to 1843:—“Miracles and prophecies are impossibilities, and all apparent predictions that seem to have had a fulfilment must have been written after the events in which they seem to have been fulfilled. Having thus settled the matter in the gross by *à priori* considerations, they proceed to apply the principles of criticism more specifically and in detail to particular books and portions of books of the Old Testament in order to show that they are neither genuine nor authentic. This criticism is of two kinds, the lower and the higher. The lower consists of an examination of the languages and contents of the books, especially of the events recorded, and of the allusions to manners and customs, with a view to determining the age and credibility of the particular books. This process in its general character is quite a legitimate one, and has often been successfully applied in proving that particular books were forgeries of a later age. . . . The higher criticism embodies the application of principles of a much more indefinite and impalpable description, and consists in substance in a mere appeal to the taste and feeling of men, an utterly uncertain and fallacious test by which to judge of matters that can be competently decided only by appropriate historical evidence.”—Cunningham, at p. 423 of the work referred to in footnote above, p. 195. It is interesting to read the—so to speak—first impression of the present subject on the part of one who now takes rank abidingly in literature as a great master of historical theology. Where he deals with *inspiration* in the “Lectures,” he notes the significant fact that, broadly speaking, from Socinianism upward, low views of the authorship of Scripture are historically associated with proportionate lowness—looseness, inaccuracy, inadequacy—of men’s views regarding the doctrinal substance of revelation.



delusively ensnaring as a wrecker's lure, perhaps called "philosophy," but really being atheistic naturalism; or, on the other hand, things received from divinely-inspired apostles (Luke i. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 6—where the Greek word is the same as at Mark vii. 9). A "tradition" thus may be Christian or atheistic; and "critical" views may be traditional, one way or the other. To make tradition an *authority*, is to reject the authority of Scripture *alone*, and to enslave the individual judgment: *e.g.*, if "a consensus of critics" be made infallible Pope.

Regarding the two most recent grand-masters of the destructive criticism (both lately deceased, within a year of each other),—Wellhausen for the Old Testament and Renan for the New,—it is said by a masterly writer in *The Edinburgh Review* (Oct. 1892), that *they abandoned criticism* properly so called, so as to be in their leadership a *reductio ad absurdum* of the movement they headed,—putting a fool's cap on its professed undertaking, to judge regarding Scripture *on the ground of what it contains*,—by basing their judgments, not really on the contents of Scripture, but in historical guesses and philosophical dogmas of their own, imported into the case as an Alpha of premiss, and *consequently* found in their Omega conclusion.<sup>1</sup> So, too, as to the judgments of their predeces-

<sup>1</sup> "Wellhausen thinks that Graf has not much improved upon De Wette's adverse criticism of the Books of Chronicles. He holds that the great task of such criticism 'is not to collect the details of evidence, but so to shape the superabundant material as to convey a right total impression.' This singular principle of criticism, as practically illustrated by the work of Wellhausen himself, means that the critic must not cautiously and soberly inquire, first, if there be any irreconcilable discrepancy between Chronicles and the older books, but must so 'shape' the points in question as always to put the chronicler in a bad light. This of course enables him to transform the slightest difference of statement and abridgment of old narratives into deliberate and transparent mutilation of the old records."—Professor Beecher, in—see below, pp. 280–1—*Moses and his Recent Critics*, pp. 229, 230.

After giving samples of the "shaping" on Wellhausen's part, Dr. Beecher—p. 234—says further about him:—"He [the unsophisticated reader] needs perhaps no great amount of learning and logical acumen to perceive that this critic creates difficulties where there are none, perverts the import of the most transparent narrative, and arbitrarily rejects any passage, however found, which conflicts with his theory of Israel's history." (The work of Wellhausen he refers to is that referred to by the *Edinburgh Reviewer* in the characterisation of Wellhausen cited below, p. 268—which see.)

sors in grand-mastership of so-called "criticism," Strauss and Baur<sup>1</sup> of Tübingen school. As represented by such masters, the so-called criticism in the recent movement has in large measure been a dogmatism of mere naturalism, virtually atheistic, in holding as *principle* of judgment, that miracle is impossible, that there is no supernatural,—making *this* a criterion for determining what to think of Scripture and its contents: so that the tradition called "a consensus of critics" may have had its fountain, not in oracles of reason or of God, but in the blind unreason of disbelief in the operative being of a God.<sup>2</sup>

Here, however, we must be careful to distinguish things which differ. Thus, though that so-called "evolution," which is merely *naturalistic*, is in this relation another name for atheism, yet<sup>3</sup> there is a really Christian doctrine of evolution

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 227, etc.

<sup>2</sup> "A third fundamental of the latest criticism, really held and acted on by its leading representatives, and not unfrequently confessed, is that a supernatural revelation, prophecy, and miracle are incredible."—Bissell, *The Pentateuch*, p. 15.

"I by no means intend to say that every one who belongs to this class of critics would take each one of these principles in the full sense here explained. But they are thoroughly characteristic of the class. Professor Robertson Smith, it is likely, would have disclaimed being governed by some of them. But Professor Smith's acknowledged masters would not disclaim them."—Pp. 17, 18. See further quotations from Professor Bissell in Appendix NOTES.

"At the bottom of all this lies the naturalistic [=atheistic, M.] denial of those great principles whose recognition is absolutely necessary to a right understanding of the Old Testament."—Vos, *The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuchal Codes*, p. 170. Regarding M. Vos, see below, p. 279, and see further quotations from him in Appendix NOTES.

"The question is fundamentally between rationalism and supernatural religion. Did the institutions of the Old Testament, and by legitimate and necessary consequence those of the New Testament also, proceed from the revelation of God? or are they the natural outgrowth of the national life of Israel?"—Professor Green of Princeton, *Introduction to Vos* above work. Regarding Dr. Green, see below, p. 279, and see further quotations from him in Appendix NOTES.

"In some cases the theory rests on the philosophical postulate that religion in any case is only a natural development, the supernatural being impossible and incredible: this is certainly the view of Kuenen and Wellhausen."—Professor T. W. Chambers in the Introductory Essay of *Moses and his Recent Critics*, pp. 26, 27,—regarding which volume see p. 279, etc.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 245.

in this relation. Again, a man may hold that *Isaiah* is a collection of the utterances of more than one prophet, while yet believing that all the utterances and this record of them are "given by inspiration of God"; and a man may hold that *Daniel* is a forgery, while yet believing in the divine authorship of "all Scripture."<sup>1</sup> Such are not cases of destructive criticism *in principle*. At the worst they may be only cases of dangerous mistake on the part of men whose principle of judgment regarding Scripture is not anti-Christian (Col. ii. 8). But we have to keep in view the fact that the movement of destructive criticism has been, and is, largely under controlling influence of a principle of anti-supernaturalism which is essentially opposed to the claim of Scripture, and the claim of Bible religion, to be either divine or true. The opposition may be in connection with such a detail as the Pentateuch, its institutions or its books; but *the thing* in question, with reference to the true quality of the criticism, is its bearing on that *supernaturalism* of revelation and redemption, without which the Scriptures and their institutions are, on the received Christian view, a body without a soul (see Note D).<sup>2</sup>

The detailed grounds and reasons which, apart from

<sup>1</sup> Only, he thinks that *Daniel* is not a "Scripture," but has crept or slid into the sacred volume through some mistake. With reference to such a case, it is said by Chalmers, "The disciple of a plenary inspiration may deny to some of our present books their title to a place in the canon" (*Evidences*).

<sup>2</sup> "Nor is it learned criticism at all. All the difficulties alleged to exist in what is called the traditional view have been seen and weighed by Jews and Christians alike from the very beginning. There is absolutely nothing new in them. And nearly all—certainly all of them that are of any moment—are as patent in our English Bible as in the original."—Principal Brown, in Aberdeen Presbytery, 14th February 1878. "The deistical controversy in England during nearly the first half of last century is the more important in the history of theological literature, because the infidel views then promulgated in England laid the foundations both of French and German infidelity. The writings of the English deists not only tended to call forth the infidelity which has since prevailed so extensively in France and Germany, but furnished the substance or at least the germs of most of the arguments by which the French and German infidelity has been defended. Voltaire, who contributed largely to introduce into France the philosophy of Newton and Locke, was at least equally successful in disseminating the infidelity of Collins and Woolston; and although the infidel neology of Germany has

atheistic anti-supernaturalism, are adduced on behalf of the destructive criticism against the received Christian view of the matter, are as a class not in their nature new.<sup>1</sup> It was said by Baur in his latest published work (posthumous), that to a remarkably large extent the present-day objections to Christianity are, often even in unchanged form, objections made by Celsus in the second century (recorded by Origen, who answers them *seriatim*). A like thing was said (with truth) about Baur's own contending, that the New Testament Scriptures are mainly forgeries, and the contending of Strauss, his pupil, that the gospel history of wonders is a collection of myths or fables. Their objections were in use of common infidelity: even their theories, and the grounds and reasons of them, had been anticipated, *e.g.*, by English deists in the seventeenth century. So as to those objections, or grounds and reasons of opposition, to the received Christian view, that now are adduced on behalf of the Old Testament destructive criticism.

Even the view that *Isaiah* is a collection of utterances of more than one prophet, is very ancient: early in the second century it was put forward by the unbelieving Jew, Trypho, in his debate with Justin Martyr.<sup>2</sup> The view that *Daniel* is a forgery was asserted by the heathen philosopher Porphyry, writing against Christianity in the third century.<sup>3</sup> And, more impressive to us, in the eighteenth century, the golden

been considerably modified in its character by an intermixture of unintelligible metaphysics, and by the exhibition of a vastly greater amount of philological and ecclesiastical learning than either the English or the French infidels ever possessed, yet its fundamental principles are to be found very plainly and fully set forth, not only in the works of Spinoza, but also in those of English infidels, especially of Tindal and Morgan."—Cunningham, at p. 231 of the work referred to above, p. 195.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 198, 223–24.

<sup>2</sup> Though Justin's "Dialogue" should be only dramatic—in the manner of his old master Plato—his putting that view into Trypho's mouth would go to show that the view then had some currency among unbelieving Jews opposing Christianity (*e.g.* in connection with the topic of a *suffering* Messiah—a "humiliation Christ").

<sup>3</sup> That view *has* to be maintained by unbelievers, because, if Daniel be *not* a forgery, then supernatural prediction is a visible fact, and anti-supernaturalism is destroyed in its foundation. There is a like necessity for denying the unity of Isaiah (see Appendix, Note D).



age of systematic Reformation theology, even the general views regarding Scripture and the Pentateuch which appear as finally matured in the present-day destructive criticism, were, in consecution of beginnings of a far higher antiquity, anticipated with a certain completeness and prestige of learning and critical acumen by, *e.g.*, the two noted infidel philosophers,<sup>1</sup> Hobbes in England and Spinoza in Holland. The new thing in our day is,<sup>2</sup> the appearance of these views, carried to an extreme of really atheistic anti-supernaturalism, and sometimes in a spirit compared with which Hobbes and Spinoza are piously reverent, on the part of what may be said to be a movement within the Christian pale.

But we now observe specially, that the present-day destructive criticism of the Old Testament has been anticipated in another way, which ought to be marked and kept in mind. It has, that is, been anticipated by *the New Testament destructive criticism* of such as Baur and Strauss. The *ground* is changed from the New Testament to the Old; but the *warfare* is unchanged: the *principle of judgment*, the spirit of movement, the characteristic nature of methods and results, are now the same as then. It is *the same criticism* in a different application.<sup>3</sup> The same, but *now discredited* by the outcome of the trial of it in the previous case. And this ought now to be distinctly noted and well remembered; for it has an important message to our present from that so recent past: in particular, to us in the present inquiry it has a sermon on the text, "All flesh is grass, . . . but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." Let us look back (Isa. i. 3)—*practising* real "criticism," instead of parrot echoing of other men's judgments (Mark vii. 7).

<sup>1</sup> Witsius (see below, p. 306, etc.), A.D. 1691, in addition to these specifics (as answered by him), *Clericus* (Le Clerc), *Simon*, and the author of a work on Pre-Adamites (*Peyrerius*).

<sup>2</sup> See footnote, p. 197, above.

<sup>3</sup> Its constitutive elements, the same in both applications, being,—1. rejection of supernaturalism; 2. legends growing into history; 3. radical revolution of the original religion, pretending to be only an evolution; 4. Scriptures forged, late, pretending early origination, to conceal the imposture, by invention of a false history.—Baur (see below in text) was really anticipated in all this by an early (abortive) appearance of the Old Testament application.

Yesterday at Tübingen, the criticism was flourishing like a green bay tree, in a school renowned as Diana of the Ephesians, with a master like a colossus bestriding all the relative world of learning. And now—? That school, which was virtually dissolved before its master's death (A.D. 1860), at present is represented among individuals only by here and there a stray survival—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—or (case of Professor Huxley?) uncomprehending echo of the long silent voice, like an incoherent ghost “revisiting the glimpses of the moon.” Christians, while the criticism was flourishing at highest, went on (cp. Eph. iv. 13, 14) steadfastly believing that the body of New Testament Scriptures are genuine writings of apostles and their authorised associates, and the Gospels a true history of the earthly career of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Their steadfastness is now justified by the result. The Tübingen collapse is a new presumptive proof of that which they believed, as new storm is new proof that a house is founded on the rock. And this new proof *of the religion* is a new reason why Christians now, when tried by similar “wind of doctrine,” should go on trusting its old Scriptures, that they are the Word of God, who spoke through the prophets and in the Psalms, having sent redemption to His folk, and who, in pursuance of a purpose of redeeming mercy toward mankind, made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel (Ps. ciii. 7).

It is well to keep that historical *experiment on the criticism* in view, were it only for guarding “the simple” against the delusiveness of a cry that is often heard in this relation, about a “consensus of critics,” as if it were asked, “Have any of *the scribes* believed in Him?” Some, who have made a reputation through ploughing with the heifer of the destructive criticism, may be found on close inspection to give really *no reason* for their theorising but the *authority* of the alleged “consensus.” Some, who offer themselves as teachers of mankind with reference to Scripture and its contents, expressly bid the commonalty of men, who are not expert in dead languages and deeply buried antiquities, *pin their faith* on the decisions of a criticism that now seems in the ascendant in certain schools. This recalls to mind an ancient utterance of “higher critics” (=judges) in their own

way (John vii. 47-49), "This people (there = "this here mob") who knoweth not the law are cursed" (cp. vers. 15-17). It would go to establish a popery of bookishness, a domination of mere technical "scholarship," as truly fatal to rational freedom, with its dignity and its blessings, though the infallibility should be in Tübingen or Leyden, as if it were at Rome.

But the infallibility would require to be real. Let us, then, remember that experiment on the criticism in our time. This will show us that in such matters a full consensus of critics, though it should be admissible as expert evidence, is far from conclusive as infallible judgment. There was (1 Cor. ii. 8) a full consensus of highest critics (= "judges") in condemning the Carpenter, who (John vii. 15) "had never learned," and (Acts iv. 13, cp. ver. 1) in casting out the fishermen, whom, after the great Pentecost, they perceived to be "unlearned and ignorant men."<sup>1</sup> There was a consensus of the book-learned in asserting Transubstantiation, and of anti-Galileo "scientism" in commanding the sun to move round the earth. So in our own day, great was the consensus of "biblical scholars" in the Tübingen fiasco; while about the same time other "higher critics" of the infallible type were stamping as a genuine antique *The Amber Witch*, a good story which really was their own contemporary, child of Dr. Meinhold's brain, a *jeu d'esprit* for testing their infallibility.

Not that much learning always makes men mad, nor that destructive critics always are much learned.<sup>2</sup> But there are "follies of the wise" as well as "fears of the brave." Learned men are, like the commonalty, liable to epidemic delusion: especially when they form into exclusive coteries, perhaps (John v. 44) visited with blindness of mutual admiration societies, or intellectual sterility as through "breeding in and in." And they are peculiarly exposed to blinding influences of Bacon's "idols of the theatre" (of system or theory, e.g. mere naturalism, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4), and "idols of the

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *idiots* = no "scholars."

<sup>2</sup> In Ebrard's famous recipe for making a destructive critic, it can be seen that show of much learning may be only *shoddy*—old clothes worked up into seeming new. And indeed, what labour of learning is required for keeping up a cry about "consensus"?

cave" (of cloisteral isolation from the open air of reality, the school of practical judgment or sense, 1 Cor. x. 15).

Now, in the present case, *the very question* is, under one aspect, whether those critics, about whose consensus the cry is raised, are not possibly, if not presumably, under such blinding influence?—whether the judgments, which we are exhorted to take implicitly on their *authority*, may not be reasonably supposed to be possibly products of cave or theatre idolatry, a domineering bookishness that is worldly in its arrogance and blind in its worldliness? These destructive critics are *on their trial*. In addressing the public through books or otherwise, they place themselves at the *bar* of that public, to be judged with reference to their views by its common reason. And if they now say in effect, "These views of ours are to be received by all other men because they are *ours*," then they in this give no proof of infallibility any more than of wise humility or modest wisdom. The party at the bar lays down the law to his judge; or says to the jury, "Open your mouth, and shut your eyes, and see what *I* will send you"! Nor is the case materially altered if it be the minor prophets of the criticism who speak, to the effect of saying, "All men ought to accept these judgments, blindly as we deliver them, for *our masters* all are of one mind in pronouncing them." Their masters at present are not the judges, but are being judged; and certainly are not shown to be infallible by having *them* as pupils, who "say ditto to" their judgments.

"Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar: unto Cæsar shalt thou go." And in the trial the destructive criticism may do service to truth by furnishing an experiment (cp. Rom. ix. 17), with experimental evidence resulting from failure—as in the Tübingen experience. The masterly Edinburgh Reviewer is of opinion that already the Old Testament destructive criticism is visibly on its way to similar collapse, in self-destruction through self-manifestation as a mare's nest; so as to leave the old received view in sole possession of the field, with gain, in improved knowledge of the Scriptures, from the new searching study of them that the movement has occasioned. And in that event this will not be the only gain. There will also be an *apologetical* gain, in the new proof of



the religion that is constituted by new failure of assault on the Scriptures. Nor will the gain be, of simply so much *additional* evidence, of the kind that resulted from the Tübingen collapse. It will be the gain of a *second line of circumstantial evidence*, making proof that is far stronger than simply twice the first. In such a case the argument is what is called "cumulative": the augmentation of evidential force is not by addition simply, but by multiplication,—*such* multiplication that (2 Cor. xiii. 1) "two or three" times one may be infinity—absolute certainty. Thus,—

The criticism, while reproducing common infidelity, has brought into the assault its own resources of learning, trained academical acumen, and industry such that the world is not able to contain the books it has written. That is to say, *all that the wit of man can do* has now been tried against the old Book. And the result, in the assault on the New Testament, has—we saw—been failure, most memorably conspicuous, thus far furnishing experimental proof that the book is an "Impregnable Rock." What, then, if there similarly be failure in the assault on the Old Testament, the only other assailable side of that Gibraltar? Then, as the result of two grand experiments, which are exhaustive, there will be not only an addition but a *completion*: there will have been completed a grand *arch* of demonstration by experimental proof: a fabric whose two sides, though separately neither of them should be able to stand, in their *combination* may be strong as the mountains round about Jerusalem. Well and wisely might Neander, consulted by the King of Prussia about suppression of Strauss's infidel book, advise against that use of force. It might have deprived the truth of the benefit of the Tübingen experiment.<sup>1</sup>

The criticism may thus do a *peculiar* service to truth, by reason of the *peculiar nature of the assault* on its part. The peculiarity of the critical assault is constituted by the circumstance that the criticism undertakes to *account for* the Bible and its history, or to answer the question,—which common infidelity avoids or evades,—*How* are they to be accounted for, if not on the received Christian view? What story have

<sup>1</sup> What Neander said was, that Christianity is best defended by its own resources,—not by the civil power.

*you* to put in place of the scriptural account of the matter?<sup>1</sup> To answer this question is distinctively the problem which the criticism has undertaken. And a failure on its part to solve the problem is important unintended (see Luke xxi. 13) service to Bible religion, through going to show that the Bible and its history really *cannot be accounted for* except on the received view,—so that the book and its religion must be of God.

So it was when the Tübingen theorising died of daylight. So long as the matter lay among objections, perhaps in remote obscurity of recondite antiquarianism, “the simple” might be perplexed (though “not in despair”—see Matt. xxiv. 24): as when Paul and others (Acts xxvii.), nonplussed in a stormy darkness, cast anchor and waited for the day. But when the discussion rolled out into daylight, and the criticism laid *its own story* of the matter open to the judgment of men’s common reason,—then it perished of the exposure: as a fish out of water, gasping, dies, or as an oyster is no sooner open than it is dead. And in dying it bequeathed a new *kind* of proof that the scriptural story is true and divine: when the rationalistic story was by mankind seen to be *irrational*, condemned by the common reason as historically absurd, then not only the criticism consequently sank into nothingness,—its fall was a distinctly new testimony of *rationality* to the truth of Christianity. Hence with reference to this new assault, believers well may comfort themselves with recollection of that failure of the same criticism in a different application, as David was heartened for his combat with Goliath by recollection of what had happened to the lion and the bear. For it is here to be remembered that when Goliath is slain, not only Israel is delivered from assault, but the Philistines become tributary servants of the new kingdom.

Believers are not now in a darkness of mere nonplus. Though they were, yet (see Acts xxvii. 25), knowing on whom they have believed and in what, they here might (see Note H) emulate the cheerfulness of Leonidas at Thermopylæ, when it was observed that the Persian arrows were so thick in the air as to darken the sun: “Then,” said he, “we shall fight in the shade.” But in fact, not only there is for them an

<sup>1</sup> Cp. above, pp. 198, 231.

inward shielding light of faith (Eph. vi. 16)<sup>1</sup> against which arrows of unbelief are powerless.<sup>2</sup> In such a case as that of the Tübingen fiasco, light ariseth unto them out of the darkness itself: as in the case of Samson's lion, "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." And this again is a dawning light of hope regarding the new assault, that it shall go with it as it went with its predecessor; hope thus giving a new song of the book (Ps. i., xix. 7, etc.); as a bird will sing in the darkness of snowstorm, if the world's heart be full of spring, and the sun—a veiled Moses—appear through the gloom. The hope is founded on the *rationality* of mankind, that its judgment shall now as before be found revolting from historical absurdity, condemning it to vanish into nothingness—

"And leave a name at which the world grew pale,  
To point a moral, or adorn a tale."

Such a judgment natively tends to be a finality, like the creation of a star, a new light for all coming time. So the judgment in the Tübingen case reasonably warrants an expectation that similarly in this new case, the criticism, like Balaam, having come to ban, shall be constrained to bless. It thus may be not really so formidable as (to "the simple") it looks: like the terrific spectre who, trading in mysteriousness, kept the population of the land in fear and trembling,—until the plain sane strength of Gäreth's manliness fought its way into the stronghold of delusion, there to smite off the helmet of imposture, so disclosing to view the face of a foolish frightened boy. A finale that, if the masterly Reviewer be not mistaken, is perhaps waiting in the not far distant future of some others who play pranks of spectral mystification.

<sup>1</sup> As to the *internal evidence*, see the present writer's work, *The Revelation and The Record*.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Paul and Silas at midnight in the inner prison sang praise to God, so that the prisoners heard them; and thus "an old disciple" in Horatius Bonar's Kelso congregation,—when tried in her devotions with whisperings (Gen. iii. 1-5) of the oldest of destructive critics, "just went on wi' her bit prayer, an' never heeded him." (Reported to the present writer by a lady to whom that old disciple confided this and other such matters.)

Those high critics have appealed for a judgment to the common reason of mankind. And instead of accepting them as infallible judges in their own case, we will remember that in this case they are only at the utmost expert witnesses; whose testimony is the less weighty because the case is their own, while their trustworthiness in witness-bearing is, under one aspect, the thing in question (cp. the controversy about Papal Infallibility). We will also remember that in this case the expertness, the special knowledge, of which we will suppose *them* to have a monopoly, is really of very little importance for a sound judgment.<sup>1</sup> The really *decisive considerations* in the case—those which the destructive critics themselves appeal to and rely on—are *not* of linguistic and other obscurities of technical “scholarship,” but of *historical fact*, the nature of *real things* in mundane history, the *reasonableness* of this construction of that history. When they speak of *these* things, they are not witnesses, but judges like their neighbours. And for judging with reference to those things the true qualification is, not mere technical “scholarship,”—“gramerie” of “curious books,”—but the qualification of a *juryman*, who may make use of expert evidence if needed; that which Paul appeals to at 1 Cor. x. 15 (where his word for “judge” is *criticise*): namely, the “wisdom” (for which his word is *nous*—as at Gal. iii. 1), which there means *practical insight*, Scoticé “gumption,” Anglicé “sense.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An expert who has made his mark in this controversy speaks expressly to the point as follows:—“The essential and fundamental matters in dispute in this controversy are not questions of ‘scholarship’ at all, in the proper sense of that term. It so happens, as a matter of course, that the men who have gone most thoroughly into these questions are trained Hebrew scholars; but the bare facts of a linguistic character with which they have to deal, count for very little in the essential questions at issue, as critical writers themselves have confessed. These writers are specialists, it is true, but specialists dealing with matters in which common sense may follow them, observe their processes, and pronounce upon their validity.”—*James Robertson, D.D., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Glasgow.*

<sup>2</sup> In this connection Professor Robertson says of some “cave” men,—“Perhaps if German scholars had gone more out into the broad light of day, and looked at these narratives in connection with the places to which they relate, instead of keeping their science, to use Socin’s words, ‘under ground, in the esoteric circle of special students,’ they would have at-



Graf, who heads the series of masters of theorising at present most in vogue among the destructive critics, made a point of asserting that in this matter judgment has now to proceed, no longer on grounds merely of *language* in the books, but on *historical* grounds of reality,—the substantive nature of the laws in connection with the varied national conditions for which the laws were supposably suitable. All the more, therefore, we are entitled to warn the commonalty against the snake-in-the-grass fallaciousness of the aforesaid appeal to consensus of critics: making what is only the technical expertness of a few specialists to be more than equivalent to the sense or gumption of mankind as a whole, entitling this witness to speak as if *ex cathedrâ, ad urbem et orbem*, from a papal judgment throne—in his own case. The *gôbe-mouche*, who pins his faith on the alleged consensus, may imagine that he is only accepting *testimony*—as of the dictionary—regarding languages and antiquities. What in fact he blindly swallows is, *the judgment, regarding history of Israel and Israel's religion*, of men who have no special qualification for *that* judgment, but may be very specially *disqualified* for it. What he subjects his own judgment to is, domination of mere book-learning where it has no right to rule; a popery of scribes who may be not even Pharisees, but Sadducees, believing neither in angel, spirit, nor resurrection,—atheistic school-masters bearing witness on behalf of themselves. In a plain matter, we are all to believe whatever story this consensus-coterie may happen to put in place of the Bible account of itself, *because* the story-teller tells the story!<sup>1</sup>

And all the time there is no obvious necessity of sub-

tained results more acceptable to average common sense" (*Early Religion of Israel*, p. 103 ; 3rd ed.). His immediate reference is to the Old Testament *topography*, so remarkable in its (unconscious or unstudied) minutely detailed exactness,—in comparison, *e.g.*, with the Palestinian topography of early Christian and Mohammedan tradition. This he regards as constituting a presumptive proof of authenticity of the materials of Israel's oldest history in Scripture, where the destructive criticism will see nothing but mere legendary cloud-land. His point is illustrated even in such a case as that of the Scottish topography of Blind Harry's *Wallace* and Barbour's *Bruce*, in comparison with that of the Arthurian legends. But see Sir J. W. Dawson's comprehensive statement below, Note T.

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 326.

mitting to such degradation of reason. To all appearance, the community may, in this matter, be really qualified to form a judgment of its own. As against the endeavour to enslave its reason through repression of its judgment, we submit the following—

NOTE *regarding qualification in the community.*<sup>1</sup>—1. Even though the question had really depended on “cave” mysteries of “scholarship,” still the unlearned might be qualified to judge as in a jury question, using expert evidence on mysterious points. As for technicalities,—a plain man, who cannot follow the higher mathematics of Newton’s *Principia*, yet may, through such reasoning as that of Ferguson’s *Lectures on Astronomy*, attain to comprehension of the starry system, or perception of *its rationale*, sufficiently for guidance of his judgment in real questions coming home to him, *e.g.*, regarding navigation or the succession of the seasons. And in the present case there are no higher mathematics. What has to be considered is a story about a plain matter, with reference to Israel and Israel’s religion. A plain man of sense or gumption can judge for himself, Is this a *likely* story, a *reasonable* account of the matter? And the most learned expert in the world cannot really do more. He after all can only, in the exercise of what sense or gumption—if any—may be given to him, ask himself, Is this a likely story? a reasonable view? yea—

2. Though for *information* the commonalty had been completely dependent on learned antiquarianism, they might yet be able to judge in the matter. Professor Owen did not need to see a moa in N.Z. With reference, *e.g.*, to *Celtic Scotland*, in a real question an unlearned man may be substantially as good a judge as Mr. Skene was, if he have as much exercised sense as that true master had. But in the present case all the information as to facts that is of real importance is within easy reach of every one who can read his mother-tongue. It is all in the Bible. Substantially, *the learned know nothing about the matter beyond what is there*,<sup>2</sup> while what is there lies open to all mankind, and is everywhere in use of Christians and their churches, “familiar in men’s mouth as household words.”

3. A *somewhat* similar case would be, that of a constitutional question in present-day politics coming home to men’s business and bosoms while reaching back to such foundations as *The Declaration of Independence*, *The Act of Settlement*, *Magna Charta*. Even here the cases are not quite parallel. For those

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Appendix, Note on “Principal Cave,” p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> “For all that preceded the time of Alexander the Bible is the only native authority.”—*Wellhausen*.

great monuments are—unlike the Pyramids—in a sense “out of sight, out of mind.” They are away from familiar knowledge of the people, so as not to be seen and *felt* in their bearing on the nation’s daily common life. And that (Matt. v. 17–20) can never happen to any Bible “foundation” so long as men “by Christ believe in God” (1 Pet. i. 21). But even in the case we have imagined, while practical men might greatly value excursions contributed by expert antiquarianism,—could any spectacle “cave” professor ever be such an utter troglodyte of book-learning, so completely wanting in sense or bereft of *nous*, as to dream of going out into daylight of real affairs, with *dictation* in a practical question of the constitution to such plain men as Benjamin Franklin, Oliver Cromwell, Edward Longshanks, or Hugh Miller? These, being large, real men, could appreciate the humour of the puny preposterousness of spectral apparition (Dominie Sampson with his “erudition”?).

To bring this matter, of the possible fitness of *the community* to judge in the present case, to a test, let us now provisionally suppose that *the story*, proposed in place of the received Christian view, is somewhat as follows (see Appendix, Note A):—

*Theoretical story of Israel’s constitution.*—The pentateuchal Scriptures as we have them, and the Mosaic institutions as these describe them, came into existence after the return from Babylon. The Scriptures, especially in so far as they bear to be of earlier date than that, are more or less forgeries (see Appendix, Note L); the history, in the soul of its main central course, is fictitious or false; and the introduction of the institutions, claiming to have been created by God through Moses, was an imposture in God’s name.<sup>1</sup> The imposture proceeded

<sup>1</sup> Bissell (*The Pentateuch*, p. 29) particularises,—“It is safe to say that a really sober Christian scholarship will never abandon a position against which so little valid objection can be urged, for one involving the extraordinary inconsistencies of that now before us.” In illustration, he has referred to the inconsistency of the view that “the authorised existence of the priestly constitution began after the Exile,” with main plain facts, *e.g.*, in the *Kings*, such as, the elaborate ceremonialism of Solomon’s temple, and the refrain of denunciation, “Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.” [It is admitted that the *Kings*, written during the Exile, are substantially authentic history.] Also, the background of reference to “the law” in the Psalms, and in the prophets, particularly those before the Exile; as well as the very existence of the prophecy and psalmody, amid surrounding degeneracy shining as “a light in a dark place” (at 2 Pet. i. 19 the reference is emphatically to *Old Testament Scripture*).

under the eye and influence of distinctively spiritual-minded prophets whose aim was, to raise the people from carnality of outwardness into spirituality of monotheism.<sup>1</sup> The result was, a radical revolution of Israel's Exodus religion, in two grand movements:—

1. *The Deuteronomic Code*,<sup>2</sup> represented by the laws in *Deuteronomy*,—(1) prescribed that there should be for Israel only one central place of worship by sacrifice, where hitherto there had been permitted freedom of altar sacrifice, as in the patriarchal age,—the high places (*Bamoth*) being, previous to Josiah's time, as local sanctuaries in Israel, something like parish churches;—and (2) it set apart a priestly tribe, of Levi (if there *was* a tribe of Levi), where hitherto the only priesthood had been that of all Israel. The revolution was effected, B.C. 621 (2 Kings xxii.) by means of "a law book," which the zealous priest Hilkiah<sup>3</sup> found in the temple when the pious

<sup>1</sup> "They [Israel's tribes of the Exodus time in Egypt] served different gods, but among them one deity was regarded as the protector of all these tribes together. . . . These tribes differed from, properly speaking, one people; the wandering life which they mostly led, rendered that impossible; and besides, they stood on a very low level of civilisation." *Kuenen*. [Mark "the wandering life," for which there is no evidence, but the contrary. But it is wanted for a colour to the preceding and succeeding assertions, which are wanted for Kuenen's theory, which here says in effect, *Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas* ("I so please and command: let will for reason stand"). Mark again theorising assumption, regarding standard of morality on the part of religious reformers (!)]

<sup>2</sup> "A clever stratagem, to secure respect for legal enactments from a reluctant people."—Bissell, *The Pentateuch*, see Appendix, Note L.

<sup>3</sup> *Clericus* (see footnote below, p. 306) held that the writer of the Pentateuch including *Deuteronomy* was that priest (2 Kings xvii. 27) who was sent from Babylon to teach the Samaritans imported into Canaan. *Kuenen* says, "We find it, however, very difficult to believe that the discovery was accidental. It was the execution of a plan formed beforehand, to which Hilkiah himself would not have been entirely a stranger. We, of course, must strongly disapprove of such deception [cp. the "holy earnestness" below, and the "shaping" in footnote, p. 249]; but those who practised it did not feel disturbed in conscience by it: the conception of good faith which was at that period entertained was much less pure than that which is now cherished. [*The standard morality*, here ascribed to zealous religious reformers in Josiah's time, is pure theorising assumption.]

"The view of history, also, which had at an earlier period been presented by the Jehovist, and with a slight modification adopted, did not entirely content the priests. [That is, *Aaronic* priests, now supplanting the older priesthood.] They therefore did not hesitate to commit to writing their own conception of this history, and in their turn to make the representation of the past subservient to the education of the people in



Josiah was king, and which ("The hider finds."—*Detective Police*) perhaps had been placed there for that purpose. It represented the new constitution as having been publicly given to all Israel, with a solemnity second only to that of the giving the direction which appeared to them to be the true one. Need I enlarge on the peculiarity of tendency? [of "clericalism," well known about in Holland]. You have all more or less clear notions of the priestly ideal."—*Kuenen*. [Cp. 2 Pet. i. 19-21; 2 Tim. iii. 15-17.]

As to the revolution of 422 B.C. (Neh. viii.).—"The people receive a deep impression both from the words of the law and from the holy earnestness [cp. above in this note] with which Ezra acquits himself of his task. Immediately, in accordance with a prescription, which then for the first time came to the knowledge of the people [here Kuenen perverts the Scripture statement as to fact], the feast of tabernacles is celebrated with unknown splendour. At the conclusion of it the crowd assembles anew. All is now properly prepared. The principal persons subscribe a document whereby they bind themselves to the strict observance of all Jahveh's commandments, laws, and institutions; the whole of the people join themselves with them, and take upon themselves the same obligation. Especial reference is made to the regulations in the interest of the temple and its priesthood, and their observance is urged. Ezra has gained his object. The third edition of the Pentateuch [including the newly-forged main part of the middle books] is recognised as the law of Jahveh, and accepted by the Jewish nation itself as the rule of belief and conduct [though they *must have known* it was an imposture! Cp. with the "holy earnestness" of *Kuenen's* Ezra the words of a book which he held in his hand, and read to the people, at Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32, xxxi. 9-13, 24-27; see as to the crime, Rev. xxii. 18; Gal. i. 8. Our quotations of Kuenen, from a public address of *his*, thus bring into view in him a modern "Ezra"—*quantum mutatus ab illo!*]

"In these Mosaic laws, the worship of Jehovah outside of the temple, on the high places, was not forbidden, nay, it was expressly permitted [here—as proof—follows quotation of Ex. xx. 24]." *Kuenen*, who prefaces with, "we must very distinctly attend to this," and goes on to set forth a process of abolishing that permission, effective in the time of Josiah, when "a new law-book was drawn up, which, nearly in its original form, is preserved to us in the book of Deuteronomy." [The permission is a pure invention of this criticism, reading its own mind into Ex. xx. 24 (cp. the judgments regarding Wellhausen at pp. 249 and 268, etc.).]

"All these commands [of *The Book of the Covenant*, Ex. xxi.-xxiii.] are represented as Mosaic. In truth they were borrowed from custom, which had been gradually formed, and from the moral principles which he had proclaimed. They were therefore Mosaic in a wider sense, and would thus be put into the mouth of Moses himself."—*Kuenen*. [Yes—by a false historical witness. Their being traditional—see *Exodus in loco*, Dods and Whyte's Handbook—would not necessarily prevent them from being really Mosaic, and "given by inspiration of God"; nor, from being enshrined in a supernatural revelation of mercy and judgment.]

of the law at Sinai, by Moses in the plains of Moab; and at least in its essential part (*the laws*) bore to have been written by him. The forgery may have taken place a century before Josiah's time, in Hezekiah's or Manasseh's.

2. *The Priest Code*,<sup>1</sup> a post-exilian imposture in Jehovah's name, centred in the creation of an Aaronic priesthood, where under the Deuteronomic constitution there had been only a priesthood common to all the Levites. Along with that there was introduced the invention of a Messiahism of atoning sacrifices—sin-offering and peace-offering—and a system of temporal support in the interest of the priestly caste. The new constitution, B.C. 444 (see Neh. viii.) was on the basis of a sketch by Ezekiel (xl., etc.) of a plan he had begun to carry out. And the Pentateuch and other historical books were so reconstructed as to hide the change, and make the post-exilian institutions appear to have arisen at the exodus time.<sup>2</sup>

3. *The Jehovist Code*, at Ex. xxi.—xxiii. (see also Ex. xxxiv.), of uncertain date (perhaps the ninth century B.C.), represents approximately the earliest Israelitish constitution. To what extent—if any—this was “given by Moses,” or in his age, is undetermined. The very solemn representations (“The Lord called unto Moses, etc.) in the middle pentateuchal books, exhibiting the institutions (cp. Heb. viii. 5) as all, one by one, called into being (Heb. xi. 3) by express creative revelation of God's kingly will, is fictitious; and (cp. Heb. iii. 5) the great mediatorial office filled by Moses in the middle books, and his grand historical action all through *Deuteronomy*, are dramatism<sup>3</sup>—“a literary form”—for the purpose of facilitating the religious revolutionary movements, through gaining affectionate reverence of the people towards the innovations, by putting on these the winningly venerable (false) face of having come down from the great Founder (founder of *what*—if of anything—is undetermined).

Our Kuenen quotations, here and further on, are from a public address on “The Higher Criticism,” expressly intended (cp. Paul at Athens, Acts xvii. 19) to show the *community* what this new criticism really is. Here, then, we see it, so to speak, on its best behaviour, as exhibited by one of its three foremost masters.

<sup>1</sup> “Essentially a fraud of the time of the Exile.”—Bissell, *The Pentateuch*.

<sup>2</sup> See preceding footnote.

<sup>3</sup> “Whatever the forte of our critics may be, they have a very decided foible for omniscience.”—Bissell, *The Pentateuch*.

Here we see no call for deep dictionary lore. Such a story is not beyond the depth of common reason. A plain man of sense is capable of judging whether this is a *likely* story, a *reasonable* view of the Bible and its history. In a community of such plain men, such a story would go the way of Tübingen, dying of daylight as soon as brought into full view of the public. Exposition would be exposure. There would be no deep discussion of its claims on human reason. The only real question regarding it would be, whether it is really possible that, with reference to the noble book of Deuteronomy and Israel's whole momentous history of religion, such a story ever, outside of Bedlam, entered the imagination of the thoughts of any human heart.

Unlearned criticism<sup>1</sup> will perhaps be found marked by one quality (highly placed by Paul in the *Pastoral Epistles*), in respect of which it may differ from the learned criticism at present in question. That is, the quality of "soundness" in mind, healthiness of judgment, sanity of reason. This quality is in schools of learning often "made light of," sometimes even expressly derided or openly scorned by name: as if *unsoundness* of judgment were deemed an indispensable qualification of a true judge (= "critic"). A Chinese manufacturer, having received an order to make a set of cups in exact accordance with a pattern that was sent him (cp. Heb. viii. 5), made a set in which every cup was *cracked*. For by accident it happened that the pattern cup had a crack in it. So it came about that crackedness of one type was made a *principium cognoscendi*, or testing-mark of genuineness: a cup without a crack in it was disesteemed as not up to the mark,—behind the age. An allegory in which perhaps the crackedness is anti-supernaturalism. Crack (or "crank") of *that type* seems to be in some quarters—not so far away as China—deemed indispensable as qualification of "a chosen vessel" unto criticism: so that, in order to be in the fashion of those quarters (see Gal. ii. 13, 14), this or that critic, though the crack should not be in him really, as a *principium essendi* or essence of being, may yet be tempted to a simulation of the crackedness,—which, as in cases of lycanthropy, may more or less impose upon himself (cp. Luke

<sup>1</sup> Greek for *judgment*.

ix. 55). Hence the unlearned criticism may be despised like a poor man's wisdom, *because* of apparent sanity, healthiness, or soundness in it (no *aristocratic* ailment): while perhaps, on the other hand, a critic flourishes through crackedness;—esteemed on account of that hall-mark, as, in “cumulative” election voting, the man with a bee in his bonnet is carried to the top of the poll by plumpers of all the cranks in the constituency. Nevertheless, in the above sample story we can see that *want of scholastic learning* is no necessarily fatal disqualification for veritable judging with reference to the Bible question.

In the popish controversy it is maintained by Protestants that, previous to surrendering one's liberty of judgment in favour of “Church” infallibility, it at least is necessary to exercise private judgment on the previous question, as to the *title* of “the Church” to claim infallible authority. And the community, called on to put implicit faith in a “consensus of critics,” is entitled and bound, before committing to *them* so great a trust, to exercise its own judgment—if it have any—on the question as to their presumable qualification for giving the law to “the rest of mankind” (*the non-elect?—Conf. of Faith*). If “the law was given by Moses,” he gave proof of qualification: what about those consenting critics?

Regarding their most recent grand-master, the following opinion was very recently<sup>1</sup> laid before the literary world in one (Tit. i. 12) of its most long-famous organs of opinion:—

*Opinion regarding Wellhausen* (the words are ours).—1. As shown in testing samples (of “Prolegomena to History of Israel”—the work under review), he is unreliable in statement regarding mere fact, on the face of the Scripture he professes to be citing or expounding, to such an extent as to be disqualified for witness-bearing, not to speak of judging.—2. He is further disqualified in this case by being substantially unacquainted with far the most important *extra-scriptural* aid to solution of the present Old Testament problems,—namely, the new light pouring in on the old Scripture from archaeological discoveries in Egypt and the East, with reference to ancient languages, customs, constitutions, and religions of Eastern peoples, specially those of Semitic race.—3. He is disqualified especially for historical judgment (that is, in this case, real judgment), by a bookish narrow closet one-sidedness, such that he can see no

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 249.



difference between an ancient Oriental Semite and a modern German.—4. In fine, he really does not read the book he professes to construe, but *reads into it* what will suit a domineering anti-supernaturalistic prepossession.

What is the use of a “consensus” of a whole world full of *such* critics? Then, the minor prophets of the movement, whose one *argument* is that “consensus,” have to be discounted as having abdicated if not forfeited the title to count. Of one of the most distinguished of these pupils, who from the outset has made most copious use (or abuse) of that one-argument method, an opinion was recorded, by a writer of similar calibre to that of the above-cited Review, in a previous number of the same Quarterly (*Edin. Rev.* April 1892). That is, of Professor W. R. Smith, as represented by his recent Burnett Lectures, specially in his handling of root questions in reference to religion and social morality, in connection, *e.g.*, with sacrifice and with marriage. The Cambridge Arabic professor is found to be in his thinking receptive rather than originative,—taking his philosophy from Herbert Spencer, his social archæology from J. F. Maclennan, and his biblical criticism from the Continental school represented by Wellhausen. And in the mind so constituted and furnished there are found the same traits of unfitness for veritable criticism (= judgment) as elsewhere are found in that master,—rash arbitrariness in assumptions even as to fact, ignorance or ignoring of information outside of the “cave” of a one-sided book-learning, and manifested incapacity for simply independent judgment on the ground of relevant evidence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of the personal authorship of the two *Edinburgh Review* articles the present writer knows nothing. Professor Green of Princeton, after an account of the contents of the Lectures (first series), speaks as follows:—

“No thoughtful reader can avoid feeling that sweeping conclusions are deduced from slender and doubtful premisses, or can yield his ready assent to novel opinions here propounded as indisputable with but slight show of proof. An inquiry into primitive Semitic religion which aims at really trustworthy results, should be based on a just and careful deduction from the entire Semitic field, and especially from the most ancient and reliable sources. The volume before us, however, purposely ignores all that has been developed from the early monuments of Syria and Babylonia, and bases itself almost exclusively on the principle of kingship prevailing in Arabia in the age before Mohammed, which stood confessedly in no special

Neglect of the light of those wonderful discoveries, to which the Reviewers allude, may appear a wilful blindness evincing *moral* disqualification for judging in the present case. The "monumental history" that is derived from them is now established in the rank of science. Yet apparently "biblical scholars," who claim to be distinctively "scientific" and above all things "historical," are unacquainted with that history! A very able writer (see Appendix, Note F), who has extensively studied the literature of the subject in connection with the Old Testament, can hardly find among that school of critics any trace of acquaintance with the relative significance of the recent discoveries, excepting (?) some such things as a scoff of Wellhausen at the "God-forsaken dreariness" of the Egyptologists. But (saith Hartley) "if reason be against a man, a man will be against reason" (cp. John ix. 39). It is long since an eminent Egyptologist<sup>1</sup> bore witness on behalf of "the monuments"—as if Israel's ancient oppressors were now speaking for Moses from their graves—with reference to the *Exodus* foundation of the Old Testament historical system, that the "scholars" of negative criticism are simply wrong, and

relation to religion, and which is pressed to consequences for which no evidence is furnished other than a very subtle and not very satisfactory process of argument. This is supplemented by *taboos* and *totems* of non-Semitic savage life, and by passages and incidents from the Old Testament, interpreted from his peculiar critical standpoint in admitted opposition to the intended meaning of the sacred writers themselves" (*The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, Oct. 1892). With reference to a bias against the evangelical doctrine of atonement, which Dr. Green perceives in the Lectures, he speaks of *The Westminster Review* as warmly commending them on this account. The present writer's recollection of a cursory perusal of the Review article referred to is, rather that it *censured* Professor Smith for not going on to the conclusion, adverse to that doctrine, for which, to the Reviewer's great satisfaction, the more special discussions in the Lectures furnish premisses. But this may be only the opposite side of the shield.

Near the beginning of his career of publication, the professor was very severely taken to task, by Principal Cave and others, on the score of his having—as if in the witness-box—represented to the general community, as conclusions definitively accepted by all scholars worth taking into account, what in reality are only the conclusions of one school, prevalently rationalistic. (With reference to that early period, see Appendix, Notes "Dr. Binnie" and "Reminiscences.")

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stuart Poole, "Egypt" articles in *The Contemporary Review*.

the scriptural representation is clearly authentic history. And growing comprehensiveness of knowledge derived from ("the land o' the leal")<sup>1</sup> the impartiality of long departed peoples, is telling with a like fatal effectiveness against the very foundations of the historical system which the destructive criticism has to put in place of the historical system of Scripture on the received view. In particular, in order to have room for a naturalistic "evolution" of the Israelitish constitution as it was at the time of the exile, that criticism finds it necessary to *presuppose*<sup>2</sup> a very low condition of the exodus Israel,—a social condition with hardly a beginning of civilisation, and a religious condition such that there *could* not be made known among them the pure and lofty monotheism of the Pentateuch. Regarding these two matters we make the following—

NOTE on two relatively vital points of archæology.—The pre-suppositions of the destructive criticism here are simply destroyed *by fact*. Thus,—1. *As to religion*. The theoretical *assumption*, that the exodus Israel's God was only a national deity, one of "gods many," not the righteous "judge of all the earth" (Gen. xviii. 25), rests on a wider theoretical *assumption* (the imagined elephant, on the back of an imaginary tortoise), that in the history of peoples, *by necessity of nature*, the earliest religious condition is fetichism, which has to be followed by polytheism before monotheism is reached. Though this had been reconcilable with general fact, yet the question would remain, whether Israel's particular case is not exceptional, through election of grace and supernatural revelation. But as to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone thought "the leal" to mean the Scottish people: they really are the dead (= "*the just made perfect*"?).

<sup>2</sup> "Laws already existing were introduced into it [the Josiah "law-book"], but most of the ordinances were new, and had as their object—what I have just declared to have been the requirement of the time—the extirpation of idolatry, and the removal of the high places. Again, the prescriptions were put into the mouth of Moses himself."—*Kuenen*. [By theorists, the high places—*Bamoth*—are regarded as now first prohibited by law, in favour of exclusiveness of the one (Jerusalem) place of sacrifice, where previously, for the centuries at and after the Mosaic age, there had been a plurality of altars at discretion. This in the theorising is associated with the deeper view—see footnotes above, p. 264—that at the exodus Israel had not yet attained to either doctrinal or practical monotheism, clear and distinct,—that the attainment was definitively achieved and fixed only, say, seven or eight centuries after the exodus, in the Deuteronomic legislation.]

the general *fact* of the matter (according to our expert witness)—(1) a full half of the scientific archæologists hold that monotheism is the *earliest* religious condition of peoples that the monuments bring to light; and (2) as for *Egypt*, where Israel grew into a people, all Egyptologists are agreed in the view, that during a period somewhat earlier than the exodus, monotheism was in that land even established as the religion of the State. So,—2. *As to civilisation*. So far from its being a matter of course that the exodus Israel must have been a mere horde of nomadic semi-barbarians, the monumental history bears witness that *in fact*, (1) Egypt, where Israel sojourned for educative centuries in beautiful fertile Goshen, possessed a high civilisation, literary and otherwise, for at least a thousand years before the exodus; (2) in Euphrates regions, among the Semitic ancestry of Israel, there was a high civilisation before Abraham was called from between the rivers; and (3) at and before the exodus time, Syria, including Canaan (= its low-land) possessed a civilisation which in some respects was ahead of the Egyptian.<sup>1</sup>

The things we here have looked at certainly are not proof of infallibility in the destructive criticism. Nor does proof of it appear in the history of that particular theory, now most in vogue among the destructive critics,—the *Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen* theory,—which comes to a head in making the priestly institutions, as authoritative “law” (John i. 17) to be post-exilian in origin. The novelty (“*newer criticism*”<sup>1</sup>), which to some (Prov. xxiv. 23) is an attraction in this theory, is illusory: witness Hävernicks (*Introduction to the Old Testament*) copiously controverting it, as ventilated by Vatke and others, fifty years ago.<sup>2</sup> Its look of recency is owing to its having undergone oblivion, after having “fallen absolutely

<sup>1</sup> Quite recently there has been discovered an ancient *Arabian* civilisation, reaching back far beyond even the Sabeian period known to us through Solomon's Queen of Sheba. “As far back as the time of Solomon, a rich and cultured Sabeian kingdom flourished in the south of Arabia, the influence of which, if not its authority, extended to the borders of Palestine.”—Sayce, *Contemp. Rev.*, Dec. 1889.

<sup>2</sup> When (*teste* Dr. Green) it was said by the great critic De Wette, derisively about “three young critics” who had ventilated the theory, that this was necessary in order to complete the possibilities—boxing the compass—of theoretical inventiveness; and twenty years later the great critic Riehm inflicted “the most unkindest cut of all,” by saying that this theory was not worth attention. What!—the *now dominant* theory? Yes,—as Wellhausen owned, saying to Vatke, Thou art my father.



flat" at the outset, held in no esteem among "the critics": until it was raised from that ignominy by the "brilliant" Graf (A.D. 1866), to become the prevalent fashion of thinking among the destructives.

He took it from his old master Reuss: without due acknowledgment of indebtedness,—as if running away with that veteran's clothes when he caught him bathing (in a cave?). At the outset Graf maintained only one-half of the theory,—cp. one side of an arched roof,—namely, that the *institutions* were in their origin post-exilian; still admitting that the *history*, in which they are pentateuchally imbedded, is pre-exilian in authorship. But Kuenen and other critics called his attention to the fact—which he curiously had not perceived—that the two sides of this arch must either stand or fall together,—that the history *cannot* be pre-exilian in authorship if the institutions be post-exilian in origin. Whereupon that critical friend and brother (witness a posthumous publication) made the history to be post-exilian!<sup>1</sup>—a highly instructive exemplification of "the case being altered alters the case": while, as we saw, he had intimated that henceforward our judgment has to proceed, not any more on mere linguistic grounds, but on *historical* grounds of decision. (Yet men say that the Germans are deficient in humour.)

So the Vatke-redivivus theorising got launched and under weigh, as the (for the present) *ne plus ultra* of higher criticism. Only, Wellhausen, the foremost of its "first three," in this movement is to the last found elusively zigzagging between Yes and No in relation to the (for the theory) essentially

<sup>1</sup> "The first thing that strikes one here is that the theory is not the result of a sustained and uniform line of criticism. It was a *volte-face*. . . . It is therefore inaccurate to describe the position of Graf as a conclusion of criticism [cp. as to Wellhausen, above, p. 249]. It was simply a hypothesis to evade a difficulty in which criticism had landed him" (Robertson, *Early Religion of Israel*, pp. 418, 419). "Ewald has left far behind him the depth of negation that was represented by Vatke and in other books, which went further, but now [A.D. 1861] have disappeared" (Auberlen, *The Divine Revelation*, p. 123 of Clark's Transl.). The original was published when the Graf resuscitation of Vatkeism—through consultation with Reuss as unacknowledged witch of Endor?—was only getting under weigh.

important question, As to those institutions, whose *authorised* existence began after the exile, had they *any* real existence—and if any, what and how—in Israel's history previous to the exile? “*These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of Egypt*”? Devotees of the consensus may find rest unto their souls in infallibility so beginning its career. To the eye of common reason, the calf, before which critics not a few are prostrate, has a look of brass rather than gold—or perhaps of gilded wood, with the gilt beginning to rub off.

Changing to Babylon, we now look to see whether—as alleged—the great Nebuchadnezzar image, if not outwardly a mere gilded wooden effigy of mankind, yet may not inwardly, instead of coherent reason, have a confused stuffing of papers about a consensus, if not mere rags or sawdust. And at first glance we perceive that (cp. popery) the *kind* of “consensus” here appears peculiar:—*concordia discors*? “dissentient consenting,” as of rival schools consenting to pull against each other in a “tug of war.” Thus, *e.g.*, Dillmann, who, though holding by supernaturalism in origination of the institutions, yet makes their origin to be long post-Mosaic,—contradicts the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen theorising in its very heart of life: while *they* make the priestly constitution to have begun to exist two centuries after the Hilkiah “find,” *he* places it in existence two centuries before that fateful discovery (if not invention). Both views *may* be wrong. But if either of them be right, then the other *must* be wrong to the “prodigious” extent of making the great stream of that so momentous history, in the distinctively creative epoch of Bible religion for mankind, to have, through several centuries, *run uphill*! And there comes the question—“Under *which* king, Bezonian?” To *whom* are we to “say ditto,”—Dillmann or Wellhausen?

“Marriage makes both one—a subsequent process determining *which* one.” But here there are two suns in the firmament, yea and a multitude of *other* suns (or meteors?). To the historical inquirer, with reference to the (consensus) theorising, a grievous difficulty rises from its multifariousness, as (cp. 1 Kings iv. 29) “the sand which is on the seashore”; with a Protean or borealic sudden changefulness, as of the ever-shifting faces in a swift-revolving phantasmagoria. The

diligent student, who found the number of theories about the New Testament to be 144 (Rev. vii. 4), found (cp. ver. 9) that about the Old Testament there are (I think) between 600 and 700. Perhaps the enumeration is only approximately correct; as when a rustic was unable to make out the exact number of a litter of pigs because they would not stand still to be counted. The theories are evanescent as "a snow-flake on the river,—a moment seen, then gone for ever"; or variable as "the rainbow's lovely form, vanishing amid the storm." And—as we owned—changeableness is attractive to some minds (Eph. iv. 14). But a poor student may groan under the cost of pamphlets—or telegrams?—in his endeavour to keep sight or count of the incessantly-new latest phases. And to a seeker for truth, as the solid way of life, the aspect of this consensus is disconcerting, as the "choice of difficulties" which confronted Wolfe at Quebec,—supposing it had been laid on him to carry his army across a flooded St. Lawrence on 600 or 700 fragments of that great river's ice, confusedly tumbling down-stream in the spring.

The difficulty is aggravated by complication<sup>1</sup> of there being several theories in the field at one time: like anti-popes—only, the old popes did not anathematise *predecessors*, as well as contemporary claimants of the throne of infallibility. The aggravation is intensified by the circumstance that, while the theories all more or less contradict one another, every one of them always has perfect confidence in itself, is immovably assured of *now* being right—*this* time. And the confusion—in such multitudinousness of reciprocally contradictory infallibilities—becomes yet worse confounded in the event of an always infallible master theoriser's contradicting *himself*: to-day's pope Self anathematising yesterday's;<sup>2</sup> or—"tell it not in Gath!"<sup>3</sup>—a latest and greatest grand-master, down to his latest breath, continuing to half-say both Yea *and* Nay to one root question as to the theorising. There may be deep reason in the variations; as doubtless there is in the changing fashions of ladies' bonnets. But to the eye of common reason they do not appear a proof of infallibility of sages, whose consensus is to displace "the foundation of the apostles and

<sup>1</sup> Case of Dillman *versus* Wellhausen.

<sup>2</sup> Case of Graf *versus* Graf.

<sup>3</sup> Case of W. *versus* W.

of the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."

Further, there have to be considered the critics who do *not* consent to the destructive theorising:<sup>1</sup> namely—not to speak of Christ and His apostles—always and everywhere, substantially the whole community of believing readers of the Bible among mankind; so that the non-consenting comes up to the "always, everywhere, by every one" (*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*) of the Vincentian test of truth in religion. It may be natural for the consenting critics to disregard them. A pious Scottish Highlander, claiming

<sup>1</sup> Take as a sample the Rev. Dr. A. Moody Stuart in the following extract:—"Of the theory that finds a new code of laws in the book found in the temple, the only plausible form is that of the rationalists ascribing it to a pious fraud. That the old book of the law should have been found in the recesses of the temple was natural enough. But that a new code of law should have been discovered there is a story that would bear telling only on the supposition that it was concealed so as to be found through them by whom it had been hidden on purpose that it might be taken for an old book of Moses, as it evidently was by the king and all the nation, who regarded it with the highest possible reverence. But such a fraud would exclude it from a place in the Holy Scriptures [Oh! *sancta simplicitas*]; and it is rejected by those amongst ourselves who deny the Mosaic origin of the book in favour of another theory, which must be regarded as both more unlikely and worse in morals.

"To remove the insuperable difficulty of fraud, it has been held that the recent origin of the book was openly stated and publicly recognised, but that a Mosaic authority was claimed for its repetition of the history of Israel and its supplementary code of laws. In that case the national assembly, to whom the book was read, concurred in an unparalleled deception on all ages to come, by sanctioning its insertion in the holiest records of the nation under the revered name of Moses. [Here follows, with a reference to 2 Kings xxiii. 3, an impressive representation of the *great historical procedure* of the nation's receiving the book,—after which we read:] By the new theory the whole nation, engaging in these solemn transactions before the Lord, handed down to all generations of mankind a book of their own days as the work of their great lawgiver and prophet seven hundred years before. . . . The fraud of a single false prophet deceiving the people would have been a lighter crime."—*Our Old Bible: Moses on the Plains of Moab*. Edinburgh, 1880.

On the same occasion, in the Scottish Free Church, scholarly defences of the historical character of *Deuteronomy* were published, *e.g.*, by the Rev. Principal Douglas of Glasgow and James Sime, Esq., of Craigmount, Edinburgh. Regarding the occasion, see further in Appendix below, Note on "Dr. Binnie," and "Reminiscences."



unanimity in a congregational vote where some opposed, ruled these out of account on the principle, "there are *sons of Belial* in every congregation." And in the judgment of negative criticism the believing Christians may be of no account, as in the heathen world (1 Cor. i. 28) they were "things which are not." But the *infallibility* of that criticism is the thing at present in question; and we, holding the balance even, must provisionally suppose, as an ideal possibility, that the criticism—*e.g.*, in its impartiality of newly-hatched expert encyclopædic information for the people—may be mistaken in reckoning Christendom as not even fine dust in the balance of judgment regarding its own book.

The tailors of Tooley Street were no doubt sincere in styling themselves "the people of England"; but they might be mistaken. And the early first French Revolutionists—the fervid orators and enthusiastic audiences, by acclamation passing enthusiastic resolutions, *e.g.*, "decreeing," that there is no God—might sincerely believe that theirs was the last word of human wisdom. But in the utterances of those anti-supernaturalists, the prophetic soul of Burke perceived only (cp. Rev. xvi. 13) the noisy shrillness of a few grasshoppers in a tussock, which appears to fill the world and be its voice, while—"without observation"—a thousand noble oxen are browsing noiseless in the meadow. An allegory far from intended for any purpose beyond reminding devotees of the alleged consensus that there are critics who have not bent the knee to negativism; and who, at the beginning of an appeal for judgment to men's common reason, ought not to be ruled out of existence by a judgment of the opposite party in the case. Recognising as a fact the *existence* of critics who do not consent, we, by the "consensus of critics" in this case, will understand, a consensus of the critics who consent.<sup>1</sup>

1. There even are "scholars" who do not consent. Apart from the thousands of them whose silence is constructive dissent, taking into account only those who have publicly contended for the received Christian view,—to speak as if all the biblical "scholarship" in the world were against it is to betray fallibility regarding fact. Not to speak of the scholar-

<sup>1</sup> We saw that their *manner* of "consenting" is very peculiar—above, p. 274, etc.

ship of Christian ages previous to—say—the Graf resuscitation of Vatkeism, and as for our own day, to name only a few individuals,—*e.g.*, in England, no name is higher in Hebrew Old Testament scholarship than Principal Cave,<sup>1</sup> the resolute champion of the received view in its completeness: while in Scotland, of the two who stand foremost in that scholarship before the world, one, Professor Robertson, of Glasgow University,<sup>2</sup> in his recent Baird Lectures (A.D. 1889) delivered what has been pronounced the most thoroughly trenchant assault on the destructive criticism, along its whole line and in its innermost intrenchments; and the other, Professor Davidson, of Edinburgh New College, long reticent, has of late reservedly (as in a fine scorn?) been dealing keen stroke after stroke at distinctive detailed positions of that criticism. Regarding some “young lions” in Britain, who, with reservations, have more or less gone into “the swim” of revolutionary critical movement, a testimony<sup>3</sup> was this last year delivered by one who—so to speak—natively is in close relation to them,—himself “a scholar, and a ripe and good one,” widely known as among the most brilliantly gifted of Britain’s younger theologians,—publicly cried shame on them as, in a sort of competitive imitation Germanism, degenerate even from “independence, the stalk o’ earl hemp in man”: an ignominiousness lamentably *beneath* what sinfulness may have alloyed the sentiment,—

Thrice happy Britain! from the kingdoms rent,  
To sit the guardian of the Continent.

In Germany itself the tide seems turning;<sup>4</sup> though no prudent man will venture to foretell “what next” of “wind of doctrine,” as from Æolus caves; in that “empire of the air.” Let us turn our eyes to a new and greater Britain, locally remote from old world prepossessions. Of scholarly resistance to the revolutionary criticism of the Old Testament,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix on “Principal Cave,” p. 326, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix on “Professor Robertson,” p. 332, etc.

<sup>3</sup> “. . . the authoritative correction which we, in our littleness, most needed. For we were shaken and confused by the new powers that had taken hold of the intellectual life. We were staggering about; we were lifted off our feet. We were weaklings caught in a strong stream.”—Canon Scott Holland on “H. P. Liddon,” *Contemp. Rev.*, October 1890.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix, Note W.

for the most impressive exemplification, in respect of breadth and strength and resolute thoroughness, is in the youngest of the Christian empires, the great new "empire of the west" (cp. Bishop Berkeley's poem): regarding which the now deceased veteran Reuss of Strassburg, himself<sup>1</sup> a very patriarch of the destructive criticism, recently said, that Hebrew was leaving Germany and migrating to America.<sup>2</sup> Regarding that land we make the following—

NOTES *regarding America* (United States along with the British Dominion<sup>3</sup>).—There, where thought is free, and scholarship is fresh and keen, while the common intelligence is perhaps the highest upon earth, the community, both clergy and laity, along with "the stalk o' carl hemp," have sense or gumption, if it be in any community on earth. So at least has Professor Green of Princeton (*Moses and the Prophets*, etc.), protagonist there of the received Christian view in its completeness: whose judgment in a *real* of Old Testament Hebrew scholarship is perhaps the weightiest now in the Christian world.<sup>4</sup> If he be deemed a home-bred youth, who consequently can have only homely wits, as resolute as he in that cause is Professor Bissell of Hartford (*The Pentateuch*, etc.), who resided in Germany so as to have studied the Old Testament question at its hottest in that glowing focus. And not less resolute than either is M. Gerhardus Vos (*The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuchal Codes*), naturalised American, but native and alumnus of Holland, which in the new critical direction is more German than Germany itself. While they carry out the discussion, comprehensively, into ramifications of relatively general reasoning, he, intensively, searches the matter, with unflagging pertinacity of keenly penetrative intelligence, through and through every institutional fibre of its Hebrew-biblical root of roots. If such men have not adequate qualification in respect of technical scholarship, where *is* it, or *what* is it? And on their part it is wielded by a clear solid strength of judgment which in the case of some "brilliant scholars" of revolutionism

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> "America is of great and growing importance in the general estimate of the situation."—Professor Sanday, *Contemp. Rev.*, July 1889.

<sup>3</sup> See Note G.

<sup>4</sup> He was chairman of the American Old Testament Revision Committee. Two years ago a German work on *Deuteronomy* was dedicated "with much esteem, to the distinguished apologete, William Henry Green,"—the author exhorting Germans, with reference to this Bible question, to study the works of Dr. Green and other Americans.

is conspicuous by its absence. To speak as if there were *nothing* worth counting of that qualification where there are such men in one cluster, is to show, not critical infallibility, but (cp. John ix. 39) blindness of "cave" or "theatre" idolatry.

More fully and directly, however, to our present purpose, as illustrating qualification *in the community* for judging relatively to such matters, is a volume of Essays, *Moses and his Recent Critics*, published at New York, 1885.<sup>1</sup> The ten writers are all professors, presumably selected with a reference to their being men of approved scholarly qualification for this public advocacy, in what effectively is a trial of the great case before their nation. And it is an important circumstance that they are very fully *representative* of the evangelical Christianity of that great empire in its various regions,—alike North and South, and from Atlantic seaboard to Pacific: "the Baptist, the Congregational, the Episcopalian, the Lutheran, the Methodist, the Presbyterian (North and South), and the Reformed (Dutch) Churches" (*Editor's Note*). The volume is thus a *testimony*, in favour of the received Christian view, on the part of that wide and powerful province of God's new kingdom in the world. And it is remarkable how great a measure, what all but completeness, of unanimity, in a community so diversified, at a time of such distraction, is represented by this manifesto:<sup>2</sup> the editor—if we rightly understand him—in that vast community is able to name only one Christian scholar of like standing and spirit with the essayists who is understood to favour the new critical views.

But what we specially mark in that publication is its bearing on the point as to the community's *fitness for judging* in such a case. Evidently the essayists have no doubt of that fitness. Not only are they themselves fully confident, cheerfully expectant, that their cause will be victorious, since truth is great and shall prevail. And not only also, they show without saying, it appears in their bearing and tone, that they feel that, in contending for the old view of the old Book, they represent the deepest heart and mind of the Christendom of their country. Also and especially, they

<sup>1</sup> Dr. T. W. Chambers (editor); Professor Gardiner, of Theological Seminary, Middleton, Conn.; Professor Bissell, of Theological Seminary, Hartford; Professor Green, of Princeton; Professor Schodde, of Capital University, Ohio; Professor Beecher, of Auburn Theological Seminary; Professor M. S. Terry, Illinois; Professor Harman, of Dickinson College, Pa.; Professor Dwinell, Pacific Theological Seminary, Oakland, Cal.; Professor Scheibart, Gambia, O.; Professor Hemphill, of Columbia, S.C.; Professor Osgood, of Rochester Theological Seminary.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Note B.



evidently believe that the community addressed by them is really capable of comprehending the argument in their contentings.<sup>1</sup> As men who respect the *reason* of that community, the essayists—instead of a parrot cry about “consensus” (of those who are on their trial)—really offer discussion of the question under various aspects. Their discussion is as full as—in such a publication—any “scholarly” heart can reasonably wish. And yet quite plainly they expect to be understood, as judge or counsel are understood in a jury trial—not only by experts in technical scholarship, but by the commonalty of readers, who have no scholarship excepting that of ordinary citizenship, who *thus* are “unlearned and ignorant” like the apostles and their Master.

2. As to *those who may not be technically “scholars”*: it is greatly to be desired that nevertheless they should be really qualified for criticism (= judgment). It is on the judgment of such plain men, who mainly *are* the community in question (1 Cor. i. 2), that, subject only to “the judge of all the earth,” the great interest of truth in this matter among mankind has in the last issue to depend. In practical effect, as in the divine intention (Eph. iv. 8), the special attainments of true scholars are not rulers of the Christian people’s faith, but helpers of its joy. The “gifts” conferred on individuals are thus for the community: to be *employed* in its judgment, as expert evidence is employed by a jury.

It thus is *the common reason of the community*, and not a domination of mere technical scholarship, that must ultimately decide,—that is, if men are to be free, and truth is to have free course and be glorified among them. The suggestion that, in the highest relations, they should pin their faith on “scholarship,” is utterly preposterous in the recollection of proofs of *unfitness* of mere scholarship to guide men in these relations with which the recent history of thought about this very matter is filled. But though every destructive critic had been an angel of light, yet to be *ruled*, in judgment as to *real* matters of Christian revelation, by the criticism of mere scholarship, would be, *to be not free*, nor in the real way of attaining to freedom through knowledge of the truth (see

<sup>1</sup> We do not suppose that Professor Green’s analysis of the first part of *Exodus* is really an exception. Intelligent laymen can appreciate the *logic* of that sample exposure.

John vii. 32, cp. ver. 36). It would be enslavement under a popery of bookishness (see Gal. v. 1, R.V., cp. i. 8). It would be a disowning of the sole authority of God in Christ, who claims to be the only Master (Matt. xxiii. 8, cp. xi. 29, 27). And not only in the American States, but all over Christendom, among communities really free, and in the habit of exercising reason, that is, of really thinking, in connection with Bible religion, the domination will not be submitted to, except (2 Tim. iv. 1-4) through blinding worldliness of those professing to serve God (Matt. vi. 21-24). *Otherwise* there is no real call, no justifying necessity, for the abjectness of that "voluntary humility." And in any case the communities have to be reckoned with. They are entitled and bound to judge in this matter; and—unless they be so blinded by worldliness—they are *capable* of judging, in possessing gumption or sense—while the learned, if they have not that, cannot rightly judge, as a parrot is no critic though it speak with tongues (cp. 1 Cor. xiv. 2, etc.).

Here, then,<sup>1</sup> we have a *third line of circumstantial evidence* presumptively in favour of the received view,—namely, in the fact of its *being* so the received view, through so many ages, in so many storms, ever "steadfast, immovable"; as if "moored in the rifted rock, proof to the tempest shock," so that "the firmer he roots him the ruder they blow."<sup>2</sup> What is the Rock of that immovableness? the root, so sustaining and sustained? Presumably (Matt. vii. 24-27) it is *reality* or truth. Not that what all men believe must of course be true. They all—including the "scientists"—believed wrongly about the stars, for countless generations, through which they were ever steadfastly gazing at those heavenly guides, and often too much believing in them. But the cases are not parallel. In that case the received astronomy, during the ages of mistaken belief in it, was not really tested by opposition of any force; and when Newton came with his

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> An eminent biblical scholar, Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in a recent publication on the subject, has predicted that the hitherto received view shall continue to be similarly the received view so long as a community of believing Christians continues to exist on earth (see Appendix, Note D).

true doctrine, the civilised world went over to it, casting the old opinion to the owls and the bats. In the present case, on the contrary, the received view in question has been tried with oppositions, "scientist" (1 Tim. vi. 20) and otherwise, from the beginning unto this present: first, of heathenism, then, of common infidelity, and now, finally, of a criticism calling itself historical and scientific. And now, as all through preceding moods and tenses of opposition, the view remains unchangeably "steadfast, immovable." The presumption from which is, that it is true.

The Bible, said Thomas Carlyle, is a very *honest* book. Is it *reasonable* to think that, with reference to its own essential character,—the *living soul* of all it says,—it has always been such a "deceiver" (Matt. xxvii. 63) as to completely mislead, all the world over, through all generations of its existence, the whole community of those who really trust it? The destructive theorising is on trial shown to be presumably untrue by its proving to be *incredible* to the community of Bible readers, rejected by their common sense as *unlikely*, in such a degree as to be historically absurd. By parity of reason, the received view, simply through being so *credited*, always and everywhere, by the whole community of believers in this religion, is shown to be *credible* to men in such a sense, that here the credibility<sup>1</sup> is presumptive evidence of truth and divinity.

*Why* should the community of believing Christians be deemed incapable of knowing truth about their Bible in the substance of its history of doctrine and worship;—so that their testimony, "steadfast, unmovable," is to count as nothing? In other cases of literature belonging to a community, the fact simply of a book's being *received* in the community as the work of A. B., is by critics held a strong proof of A. B. authorship. And in the present case the community not only has received and held the books in accordance with one unchanging view; but it is founded on them, and lives on them and in them, giving its life to habitual study of them, so that a believer in the religion is "a man of the Book." This is one aspect of the fact that, in the estimation of those believers as a class, the true "scholar-

<sup>1</sup> German, *Glaubwürdigkeit* = "worthiness of belief."

ship" is *discipleship* (see Acts xi. 26) in the sense of "learning of" Christ (Matt. xi. 29, cp. ver. 27, xxviii. 18-20—where "teach" is = *make disciples* of them, bring them into My school): while destructive critics (*e.g.* Renan and Kuenen) are often far from sitting at the feet of that "one" Master. Yet, while these are to rank among infallible critics (= judges), the judgment (= criticism) of the nations and generations of believing Christians is to go for nothing, not reckoned even as dust in the balance of testimony! Such in effect is the relative meaning of the cry about "consensus" which (cp. Matt. xxiii. 8) some professing Christians are found emitting!

One of those believers (1 Cor. ii. 15—where his word for judge is *criticise*) maintains that, for judging regarding scriptural matters, which—as indeed is owned by destructive critics—are at bottom in their destructive nature "spiritual," true believers possess a *special* qualification, which (ver. 14) a merely naturalistic critic cannot possess, in their having a spiritual mind. So (Matt. xiii. 10-16) his Master taught before him, quoting the great evangelical prophet of the old dispensation. And it stands to reason that the spiritual mind should be fittest for judging with reference to spiritual Scriptures; as Robert Burns might be a better judge than college-made critics in matters referring to Scottish song, by reason of his having in him, what they had not, *the living soul* of Scottish song, to guide his judgments through its formative influence on his heart and mind.<sup>1</sup>

The Greatest of all teachers has declared it to be a purposed effect of the coming of heaven's light in Him (John ix. 39), to show the blinding influence of worldliness on professed illuminati. Unquestionably the mere naturalism, which destructive critics are found holding as a principle of judgment regarding Scripture, is in its native tendency a *darkening* as well as deadening influence relatively to things

<sup>1</sup> A master of the present subject has called attention to the fact, that precisely *the living soul* of Israelitish history of institutions is what is *excluded* by the destructive criticism from our contemplation of that history and of the literature which grew out of that history. Shall we reckon the exclusion—of the sun—a qualification for infallibly judging as to the system? If not, then what *other* difference is there between destructive and believing criticism?



in their nature spiritual:<sup>1</sup> witness (1 Cor. ii. 8) those highest critics (judges) who "crucified the Lord of glory." Those who believe in God will own as conceivable that He should *hide* things from the wise and prudent (see 2 Thess. ii. 11; cp. Eph. iv. 18, 19) which He reveals unto babes. In any case the blindness—whether wilful (Rom. i. 28) or judicial (vers. 24, 26, 28), or necessary (Matt. vi. 21–24)—to that which was *the living soul* of Israelitish institutional history, is a so far disqualification for judgment regarding the body—of the Scriptures—in which that institutional history is all in all. And, on the other hand, to be delivered from that spiritual blindness is, of course, to be so far gifted (Luke viii. 10, 15) with qualification for judging in the exercise (2 Tim. i. 7) of a relatively "sound mind."

Such considerations, relatively to the great community of believers not consenting to the destructive criticism, may help the commonalty of mankind in maintaining the liberty here in question, namely, the liberty to *judge*, instead of blindly accepting mere dictation of technical scholarship. That liberty is based on their possessing *the common reason*, which is the only faculty of judgment in possession of the learned experts. The *grounds* of judgment—the informatory materials of evidence—are in nowise a monopoly of those experts: as all the researches in the critical movement have, relatively to the New Testament, brought to light no materially important information that was not within reach of Christians at the close of the second century, so with reference to the Old Testament all the now extant material information was—say—four centuries before that time within reach of Old Testament believers; and supplementary information, *e.g.*, regarding language and antiquities, can easily be obtained by "the simple" from trustworthy sources far on this side of Tübingen and Leyden (while any growth in capacity for soundly judging that may to mankind have resulted from the progress of Christian civilisation, is an heritage that can be shared in by believing Christians, even "ignorant and unlearned men" (Acts iv. 13), as well as by destructive critics).

<sup>1</sup> See statement of Mr. Gladstone, Note C.

To bring the matter to a visible point, we again will put it in a concrete form.

*A judgment of the common reason* by plain men might conceivably proceed as follows:—

*“Unlearned and ignorant” criticism of the theoretical story.*<sup>1</sup>—Whatever the truth of the matter may be, it *cannot* be this. Here a pious king,<sup>2</sup> and a zealous priest, countenanced by a prophetess of Jehovah, and burning with ardour for religious reformation, conspire to impose on a trusting Israel, by means of a forged book of law, a new religion, hiding the imposture under a face of its being Israel’s old primeval religion,—all in the name of Israel’s living God, whose glory is holiness, whose being is truth. The wonder of their expecting the nation to be in this way deceived about such a matter of public notoriety, affecting the whole system of the nation’s past and present common life, is trebly crowned by the miracle of the nation’s accepting, strongly against the grain of its present inclination, as having been publicly “given by Moses” with most memorably impressive solemnity, to all Israel, seven or eight hundred years ago,—a whole system of laws which in fact, everybody knows, was not so published by him, but<sup>3</sup> is now so published for the first time, to the effect of a radical change of the nation’s existing system of religion. The nation’s fatuity is even more astonishing than that of the conspiring prophetess, priest, and king.

In respect of fraud and falsehood, forgery and imposture, the story is of a piece with the other story about “holy men of God” claiming to speak by His inspiration, and act as His especial commissioners, who at the exile time conspire to introduce another new religion. But in respect of artistic skilfulness there is a contrast of the two grand impostures: which perhaps might now be made a proof of the new theory, on the view that at the time of the Deuteronomic forgery the art of dramatic fiction was comparatively in its infancy, so that there must have been generations of practice—say, in schools of the prophets—to train the holy men into the perfection which appears in their Priest Code of the middle pentateuchal books. The account in those books, of a Mosaic origination of priestly institutions in the wilderness, is a miracle of inventive genius, in making everything *appear* as if there and then originating at the hand of Moses by express command of God.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 263–6.

<sup>2</sup> The criticism does not require that Josiah should be a conspirator: it allows him to be an idiot—*believing* the story.

<sup>3</sup> See Note N.

The representation is as like reality as if it had all been true. And it is so "shaped" (to use a word of Wellhausen)<sup>1</sup> that a *belief* in the truth of it, gradually forming in the people's mind, would save the purpose of the fiction, *to carry out the programme* of imposture. The Deuteronomic imposture, on the other hand, with reference to that purpose, appears rather a wonder of clumsy ineptitude, fitted really to frustrate the purpose of the conspirators, by putting a fool's cap on the representation, self-exposed as impious mockery.<sup>2</sup>

That a Mosaic origination of the *priestly* constitution—a comparatively private matter—should have lapsed from the people's memory in long course of ages, might at the exile time perhaps be not altogether inconceivable to the Israelites—as it is inconceivable that the United States American people should forget the Revolution. But in Josiah's time it would be utterly incredible to them that there should have disappeared from the nation's mind all trace of a Deuteronomic legislation which, if it really took place, was, next to the Sinaitic legislation, far the most memorable transaction in the nation's history after its baptism in the Red Sea. And Israel, now *having no recollection of such a transaction*, can be moved by a quasi-historical representation of such a thing only to ridicule or to resentment, perhaps with grief and shame on account of the farce played in the name of God, by those who in their offices—kingly, priestly, and prophetic—are at the holy nation's head.

The suggestion of a "*programme*," to be carried into effect through the nation's acceptance of that forgery, bids us look into the book, to see how the injunctions of its discourses would *serve the working purposes* of pretended reformation in Josiah's time. And regarding these injunctions, we note the following points:—(1) Even the laws peculiar to this book have no peculiar appropriateness *for Josiah's time*, but the giving of them *would be* specially appropriate for the inaugural time of proceeding to settlement in Canaan. (2) *The alleged innovation* on Josiah's part, of centralising Israelitish worship and narrowing the priesthood to one tribe, does not to us appear in *Deuteronomy* as an innovation under a false face; but as it would

<sup>1</sup> See footnote above, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> "It is an impressive whole, which testifies both to the talent of the writer and to his conscientious earnestness" (!).—*Kuenen*. [Cp. the "strong disapproval," footnote, p. 264 above.] "The drapery [of the Mosaic dramatism], for it is no more than this, affords the writer of Deuteronomy an opportunity repeatedly to adopt the tone of earnest warning, which suits him better than the dry legislative style."—*Kuenen*. [*E.g.* about conquering Canaan, exterminating its nations, a future first beginning of kingship?]

naturally have been presented by Moses; while as a mere innovation it really *could not* be introduced in Josiah's time. And (3) to a very large extent the *distinctively* Deuteronomic injunctions—those which in their commanding prominence give character and tone to the whole Mosaic address—*would have been absurdly out of place in legislation at a later period than that of the original settlement.*

How, for instance, would the following injunctions fit into a "programme" of reformation for Josiah's time.—1. With great solemnity of iteration and reiteration in Jehovah's awful name, His chosen people now are called to begin the holy war of conquering Canaan:—*when Canaan was conquered* by them seven or eight centuries ago!—2. With like solemnity they are charged to be unshrinkingly thorough in extirpating the Canaanites, and receive particular instructions with reference, *e.g.*, to besieged cities and prisoners of war:—*when* for long generations there have been no cities to besiege, nor war-prisoners to dispose of, nor Canaanites to extirpate; but peaceable neighbours quietly settled under shield of Israel's covenant of peace to them.—3. Provision is made for a possible future beginning of kingship in Israel, particularly that the king shall be Israelitish in blood:—*when kingship has existed* in Israel for half a millennium, and almost from its beginning the kingdom was divided into two, one of which was destroyed a century ago; while in the other it has always been, as it were, a natural impossibility that the king should *not* be of Israelitish blood, seeing that from its commencement the Judah house of David has been established on its throne inseparably from the being of the kingdom.—4. The (so to speak) *foreign policy* of Deuteronomy—its aspect or bearing toward Amalek, Moab and Ammon, Edom, Egypt—is precisely what would suit the time of Israel's passing from the wilderness into Canaan, and quite unsuitable for Israel's position in the time of the later Judah kings.

But the crowning ineptitude, an unspeakably shameful incongruity, in the fiction, is its "*Moses.*" Here the most venerable personage in all history is turned into a marionnette, as a mediæval hero-saint may come to sink into theatrical stage pantaloons. In a supremely great discourse the effigy, in the great name of the Highest, prefacing with a narrative of events which (according to master critics) never occurred, goes on to bewray the masquerade by speech recapitulating, expanding, amending, laws which never existed until centuries after the real historical Moses was laid in his mysterious grave. How could the people be moved by such a representation to receive and reverence the innovating laws? Would they not rather,



if they had in them *any* reverence for sacred things, or patriotic feeling toward a glorious past, be moved to deep sorrowful humiliation and burning indignation—"To your tents! O Israel"—by such dishonour to the name of God and the memory of His prophet?—a travesty all the more disgraceful on account of the theocratic standing of the leading movers in it.

Such a heaping of impious ineptitudes, if it had been possible through some strange madness of the king, and priest, and prophetess, yet could never impose on a whole people to the effect of inducing them to accept a radical revolution, at the cost of their existing religion, their national traditions, their collective and individual self-respect, their elementary feelings of religion and morality.<sup>1</sup> Shall we, then, believe, with some of the theorists, that the nation itself was consciously participant in a revolting farcical silliness, that should *mislead all following generations*—by way of entering into a new (man-made) covenant with God? No: this theoretical story raises no question about believing or disbelieving any version of it. In its very conception it is a jumble of incoherent absurdities, such that seriously to entertain any question about believing or not believing it in any shape or sense would on our part be a senselessness akin to that of its own Israel of King Josiah's time. We have heard that scholars may be addled with books upon the brain; now we seem to see it.<sup>2</sup>

Saul, going for asses, found a kingdom, perhaps because there was kingliness in him (Deut. xvii. 14), and man finds what he brings,—so that even an irrational anti-supernaturalism can find its own lost self in the Bible! The bizarrerie, not worth even *disbelieving*, which learned men see in history, is not in Scripture, but in their manner of looking at things, as if "from between their legs." Accordingly we find that this criticism, when "done into English," has to perpetrate a large amount of tinkering at the Scriptures—making their contradictions of it to be "interpolation," etc.—before it can make them so much as appear to have a look of countenancing its representation of the history it professes to find in them. Nor is the representation got out of "the twist" of its incurably perverse manner of exhibiting the matters by spreading the process of innovation over a great period, in which its progression—like the grass's growing—is imperceptible to the naked eye. That would resemble the alleged "evolution" in natural history of life, through which in æons of time, *e.g.*, a dog might be produced from a cat, or a man from "a hairy quadruped,"

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note N.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Appendix, Notes Q, R, S, T.

"perhaps living in trees." Though there had been the time, *no amount of time can change the essential nature of things*, "evolving" a square from a triangle or a circle from a square. And the evolution through which a polytheistic exodus Israel "grewed," like Topsy, into the monotheistic Messiahism of later prophecy, we will not ascribe to any process on Bible record, implicating "Israelites indeed," such as Josiah, Hilkiyah, and Huldah; but rather, to hallucination of critics as of Graf, Kuenen, Wellhausen, about whom we hear as if *they* had been infallible prophets or apostles (if not—in a true sense—veritable creators, "calling things which are not as things which are").

With reference to *the Levitical institutions*, again ("Priest Code" in the middle pentateuchal books), plain men of sense are not incapable of judging. For instance, they can see the point and force of such questioning as here follows:—1. *How came there to be*, for ages, in commanding influence, among such "a people of unclean lips," the spiritual-minded prophets (say master critics), with no light of supernatural revelation to them, nor life of new creation in them?—2.<sup>1</sup> *What sort of spirituality was theirs* who, in the name of the one true living God, and in the public ministry of religion to His covenant people trusting them as His ambassadors,—countenanced and practised fraud and falsehood, forgery and imposture, for introduction of human inventions pretending to divinity of authorship; by way of labouring for a pure and lofty monotheism, whose living God is holy, just, and true?—3. Seeing that *they* were not utterly fatuous—is it not very strange that, for their purpose, to raise the people from carnality of outwardness, the crowning finality of innovation should have been, the imposition of a system in which (Heb. ix. 10) carnality of outwardness—say, innocent carnality, as of a babe—was all-pervasively the prominently distinctive character?—4. Is it rationally credible that in Israel there was not, until after the Babylonish captivity, that authorised atoning sacrifice of, *e.g.*, trespass-offering and sin-offering, which is the soul's blood of Bible religion in both dispensations?—5. Can it be that, instead of "the law and the prophets," the true historical order of origination—"genetic development"—is "the prophets and the law"? These

<sup>1</sup> See Notes Q, R, S.

questions are plainly decisive, cutting to the root of the matter. Mere "scholarship" can give no real help to answering them; and sense or gumption has no real need of help to answering them.

We now can see *a cause* of the slavish harping on "a consensus of critics" instead of manfully exhibiting the critical theory in its outcome, of a theoretical story of Israel's constitution. The story, to which the theorising leads, cannot, at least in America or Britain, bear the daylight. It is a Frankenstein fiend, destroying him who calls it.

THE ROOT PRIMARY QUESTION.—Plain sense can see how all this bears on the question regarding ("The Jehovist Code") *the exodus Israel, the Mosaic legislation, Moses himself*. In the case of Graf, we saw <sup>1</sup> a sample of the fact, that a theoriser may *make* the history to be this or that in the interest of his theory.<sup>2</sup> Where the theoretical interest hangs on *excluding supernaturalism* from Israel's history,<sup>3</sup> there, in the spirit of the theorising, the pentateuchal Mosaism is, in greater or less measure, suppressed on account of its downright supernaturalism in works and words.<sup>4</sup> And in the residual Mosaism that remains after the suppressions—through Deuteronomic and Priest Code theoretical stories—the things of the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> For "shape," as Wellhausen's word, see footnote, p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> As it does even in the case of theorists who believe in supernaturalism as having had place in that history. Their *theory*, in its distinctive principle (of evolution), goes only as far as naturalism can carry them; and ordinarily the *distinctive* in their construction of Scripture, as compared with that arising from the full received view, is a *minimising* of the supernatural in favour of simply naturalism—not necessarily atheistic.

<sup>4</sup> Of relative Scripture, Kuenen speaks as follows:—"More or less hazy and confused, so long as they were not committed to writing; it was only when this took place that connection and unity were introduced into them. It thus was a highly important task that our prophetic writer undertook when he collected, arranged, and completed the detached narratives and popular legends." [This writer, "the Jehovist," was an unknown prophet, who, *circa* 750 B.C., wrote the "first edition" of the Pentateuch—afterwards much amplified and altered. One of the "legends" was, *e.g.*, that of Jacob—their supposed father—and Esau, which grew out of the *national* enmity between Israel and Edom.]

"The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, which is closely connected with it, now contain together 211, or, in round numbers, 210 chapters. Of

primeval period, even Moses himself ("a gigantic shadow"), as well as his legislation, tend to fade or blur into legendary folk-lore, if not vanish into myth.<sup>1</sup> *All which things are presumptive disproof of the theorising* that lands in them,—inasmuch as, generally, the exodus Israel, a Mosaic legislation, a mediatorial Moses, *have* to be supposed in all true theorising here, unless Israel's whole history be a stream without a fountain.

The theorising thus is branded with incredibility by an unmistakable *pentateuchal realism* even in details. For example, in the account of erecting the tabernacle, and the unconscious picturing of the Sinaitic surroundings<sup>2</sup> in place and time, of natural and human life in that primeval condition. Charles Lamb said of Defoe, that he is the greatest "matter-of-lie man" in literature. But in this respect he was nothing as compared with the exilian Jew or Jews who, a thousand years after the exodus, composed the Priest Code fiction of the middle pentateuchal books. Defoe had *the making* of his Crusoe and island and savages, as well as tent; while the Babylonian scribe, in his tabernacle, and wilderness, and other Mosaism, had to conform to conditions with which he was in large measure unacquainted, that were fixed by nature and history. His achievement, in its full exactness of multitudinously detailed prosaic realism, always conforming to the these 80 belong to the first edition; the second had 120, so that in the third 90 have been added." [Great is "criticism"! Query: Would the unknown prophet now be able, in the existing pentateuchal amalgam, to know with such exactness the total amount of *his* contributions? No two critics agree in specification of his contributions in detail.] In the first edition, the (Jehovist) author "draws copiously from the stores of tradition and legend." [Regarding the third edition, see footnote, p. 265 above.]

"Some years later [than Josiah's reformation (B.C. 620)] the author of this [Deuteronomic] law incorporated his own work in that of his predecessor, the Jehovist [the *code* is named "Jehovist"], and on this opportunity made some additions to it. . . . In this way the second edition of the Pentateuch was completed. More than 150 years elapsed before the third and last edition was completed and accepted by the Jewish people." [The later editions, by way of bringing the earlier up to date, "shaped" the whole book—Wellhausen's word, see footnote, p. 249—anew from the beginning in accordance with *their* new story, putting their present inventions back into the primeval history!]

<sup>1</sup> See Notes P and E.

<sup>2</sup> See above, footnote, p. 261; cp. Note T.



unknown conditions (*now* known to us),—this, in such a comparative episode of the romance as the tabernacle erection, is a wonder far eclipsing the Homeric *Shield of Achilles*: were it only because Homer, too, like Defoe, had the making or the choosing of his conditions from among things well known to him (not less truly than Shakespeare, the creative, had in the matter of his play within a play). And it is not only in every minutest detail of the tabernacle erection that we are—like Crusoe on the seashore—confronted with a footprint of distinct reality, which, if it be genuine, destroys the theorising.<sup>1</sup> The prosaic realism confronts us everywhere in the scriptural Mosaic age. It is verified by all that has *now* come to be known of the actual conditions. And the verification is presumptive proof of the authentic truth of the history.

Now, however, we will look on the external details only, in connection with the substance of primeval Mosaism as a beginning of the Israelitish nation's history now in question. And in search of that substance we will seek a guiding way through cloud-land of theorising in what<sup>2</sup> we early saw of a real *evolution* in the pentateuchal history. It is important that we should here see clearly what *is* a true evolution.<sup>3</sup> "Evolution" is *unfolding* of what is *infolded*. And, beyond what we saw of an unfolding within the scriptural Mosaic age itself,—on the received Christian view as to the Old Testament there could be a real evolution all through Israel's post-Mosaic history, in the sense of continual unfolding of an Israelitish constitution that was "given by Moses" complete in a Sinaitic planting. So, too—in intention—on the half-way view of some. The evolution in their view is of what was *complete* in substance as existing at the exodus time: the completion which came after that being in respect of realised manifestation (see John ii. 11, cp. i. 14).

<sup>1</sup> So that theorists are found asserting that this Exodus Tabernacle never existed. But the present question is, about the rational possibility of invention of *such* an *unreal* Tabernacle by a Babylonian forger. It is a tradition about Shakespeare that, when asked why he had so early killed Mercutio (*Romeo and Juliet*), he answered, that otherwise Mercutio would have killed *him*. The Exodus Tabernacle, even apart from surroundings, would have been thus a Mercutio to all the scribes of Ezra's time.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 245, and footnote there.

<sup>3</sup> See Note M—*addition*.

Suppose the constitution to have been "given by Moses" in a real completeness as of a tabernacle he had "made in the wilderness" (1 Chron. xxi. 29). Still,<sup>1</sup> in *the people's* mind and life,—in the Israelitish realisation of the ideal thus exhibited,—there could be, under influences of experience and reflection, with prophetic expositions and applications, a continual growth toward fulness in apprehension or clearness in comprehension of what had been in the constitution complete from the outset: somewhat correspondingly to the historical development of Christian doctrine in the mind of the post-apostolic Church, after she had received the whole system of that doctrine as if bodily in the person and in the word of Christ. And<sup>2</sup> some adherents of the received view as to supernaturalism are of opinion that, as the tabernacle simplicity gave place to an elaborate gorgeousness of temple system, so there may have been a real evolution even of natively Mosaic institutions,—*e.g.*, out of a rudimentary Sinaitic form, represented, say, by *The Book of the Covenant*, into a complete unfolding in the course of ages following, represented, say, by *Deuteronomy* and the middle pentateuchal books.

Let us now put the destructive criticism—professing "evolution"—to the testing question, *Had the post-Mosaic constitutions it speaks of a real existence in a Sinaitic seed?* We now perceive what well may occasion theoretical zigzagging between Yes and No.<sup>3</sup> The question places the theoriser between the horns of a dilemma. If the answer be Yes: the priestly constitution did exist in the wilderness, but only in germ,—then it can be retorted, If it existed there in any real way, though only as a microscopic seed-spore, there is no call nor place for your post-exilian *creation* of it; for it can have *grown* into the post-exilian completeness, as a Mosaic bud unfolding into blossom and maturing into fruit. If, on the other hand, the answer be No: in the Mosaic age there was not even a germinal existence of the constitution,—then it can be asked, In that case, where is your *evolution*? Your "scientific" history, it seems, is not history at all, but only incoherent antiquarian gossip strung in an order of time. A similar dilemma for the theorising rises out of its *Deuteronomy*

<sup>1</sup> See Note O.<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 244, etc.<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 273.

constitution story; and may account for a noticeable shyness or haziness in theoretical representations regarding *what* really existed as "law" in Israel before Josiah's or Hezekiah's time.<sup>1</sup> If before that time this constitution existed even in germ, there is no call for a "theory" of imposture and falsehood; and if before that time it really existed not in any way, there was no true evolution of it at that time.<sup>2</sup>

*Was* there, or was there not, a real evolution in that history? If there be not a real evolution shown in the theoretical history, we have only antiquarian guide-book temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel, in no genetic relation to any real Sinaitic tabernacling of Jehovah among men. And<sup>3</sup> while on the received view the pentateuchal constitution is to Israel's post-Mosaic history as a Galilean sea that feeds the Jordan, making Jordan's valley to be "as the garden of the Lord" (Gen. xiii. 10),—on the destructive-critical view that constitution is, to Israelitish history of the times before Josiah and the exile, merely a Dead Sea, that gives nothing to the river and its vale, but only receives what comes down from them (changing the nature of that)—*unless* there be a real evolution. Now,—

*A real evolution does not change the nature of that in which it works, as the Dead Sea changes Jordan water.*<sup>4</sup> It unfolds the nature into new manifestations, but retains its being or essence unchanged: as the New Zealand umbrella plant, unfolding into a succession of varied forms, as if changing into so many distinct species, always really is one and the same, individually and specifically. Even so might, conceivably, a Mosaic constitution unfold, in the course of post-Mosaic history, into greatly changed aspects, correspondingly to changed conditions in the nation's unfolding life, first under the kings, and thereafter at the exile time,—as compared with the original aspect or form of that same constitution in the wilderness. The question here is,—

<sup>1</sup> "It is not a little remarkable that modern critics, while they tell us very particularly the historical circumstances under which the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes were produced, can tell us very little about the earliest of all the Codes, the Jehovistic."—Robertson, p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote above, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> See Note M.

<sup>4</sup> What appears in the healing of water is *miracle*—not evolution.

*Are not the changes implied in the destructive theorising such in their character as to make the essential nature of the existing constitution give place to a really different nature? If they be, then it is idle, it is delusively fallacious, to speak about "evolution": as it would be, to speak about "evolving" a square from a triangle or a circle from a square. The thing affirmed, if it involve a change of nature, is not really evolution, but revolution. To hide the pea, of a change of nature, under the innocent name of evolution, is to play the conjuror who takes out a serpent where his neighbour has put in a dove. Now, according to the theorising in the hands of its real masters, to make an essential change of the nature of the constitution was the one purpose of the "evolution," alike in its two grand movements: first, Deuteronomic, a transition to pure monetheism from virtual polytheism (changing triangle into square); and second (changing square into circle), post-exilian, a transition to Messiahism of high priesthood with atoning sacrifice. The innocents, who think about the theoretical revolution without that change, merely do not see the pea. And to spread the process over a wide period, in which the radical revolution is at every moment imperceptible, is only to hide the pea.<sup>1</sup>*

What, let us consider, really *was* the essential nature of the Israelitish constitution in the Mosaic age? On the received view,—according to the scriptural account of the matter,—it was *supernaturalism*, of revelation and redemption,

<sup>1</sup> "What may be called by admirers a delicate process of criticism may appear to others uncommonly like a piece of literary thimble-rigging" (Robertson, *Early Religion of Israel*, p. 150). Cp. Note A. "Not only are the narratives of the Pentateuch so treated [as to be, "in short, fictitious"]; the historical and prophetic books are in a similar manner discredited, so as to be admissible as testimony only after they have been expurgated or adjusted on the principles of the underlying theory. The historical books, we are told, were written long after the events they relate; and even when they contain the record of historical facts, these records are overlaid with later interpretations of the facts, or even glossed over to obliterate them. Even the prophetic books are not to be relied on to determine the religious history; for the books, in the first place, have undergone great alterations in the process of canonisation—and in the second place, even where there is an unambiguous declaration of a prophet as to a certain sequence of events, it is open to us to accept or to reject his statement on 'critical' grounds" (the same, pp. 466, 467).



by historical manifestation and working of the one true living God, in accordance with a covenant promise regarding Israel to their fathers. *This* (Ex. xxxiv. 4-7) is what was folded in the great "name" of JEHOVAH (in Hebrew pronounced *Jahveh* ?), now distinctly manifested (cp. John i. 18, ii. 11) as the proper name of Israel's God and Saviour. And *the constitution, with this as the heart and soul of life in it, remained the same in its essential nature through all the pentateuchal changes down to the close of Deuteronomy.*<sup>1</sup> The greatest of the changes, in the rising of the priestly institutions, only brought that vitally constitutive supernaturalism, which begins to appear in *The Book of the Covenant*, most commandingly into view.

On that view of the matter, the "difficulties" which arise (perhaps inevitably) do not weigh much in the judgment of solid reason. It sees that in such a case, of varied representations of a great complicated historical movement of a constitution rising toward completed existence, there could hardly fail to be difficulties for us now in harmonising them (cp. the case of the gospel histories). And the difficulties may not be found solvable by us. Closer investigation, if it result in ascertainment of particular solutions, and perhaps of new principles or methods of solution, may also bring into view difficulties previously unsuspected. It may be that on the whole, the *net amount* of difficulty felt as pressing at any one time shall not much vary in the successive generations. *It never has moved the community of believers in that essential supernaturalism to abandon the received view as to the Old Scripture*, nor kept any community from receiving that view. Correspondingly, theorists opposed to that view, and making rhetorical use of difficulties in harmonising—which they exaggerate, multiply, manufacture<sup>2</sup>—show "between the lines" that to them the real root difficulty lies in the essential substance of the view. "The captains of Captain Pen"—the shrill minor prophets of the adverse criticism—may more or less be thus evil in action yet innocent in intention. Captain

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 245 ; cp. footnotes above, pp. 263-6.

<sup>2</sup> Directly, by misrepresenting the scriptural accounts ; or circuitously, by means of subsidiary theorisings, that may enable them to get rid of books or passages whose difficulties are solved.

Pen himself means anti-supernaturalism. His free handling of Scripture means, that the supernaturalism, which to him is the root primary difficulty in the scriptural account, was the heart and soul of life in the Israelitish constitution *through all the ages now in question.*

NOTE regarding "*discrepancies.*"—In the *Deuteronomy* laws, intended for the nation generally, there was, *on the received view*, little occasion for detailed specification of ceremonial, away from the people's common life, and amply detailed in the Priest Code specifications.—A case of *modification* of the law, adjusting it to Israel's now changing condition, is that regarding the blood of an animal slain for common food: at Lev. xvii. 4 the law is, that the blood shall be brought "to the door of the tabernacle" (*which was practicable in the wilderness camp life*); at Deut. xii. 16, xv. 23 (*with reference to a—settled Canaan—condition in which that was practically impossible*), the law is, that where the Israelite is resident the blood shall be poured on the ground as water. The *purpose* of the law, to guard the sacredness of blood (Lev. xvii.)<sup>1</sup> is best secured in each place by the form of the law in each place.—A case of *changing* a law is (Deut. xiv. 24–26) that of now permitting an Israelite, instead of bringing certain sacrifices bodily to the sanctuary, to bring the price of them from his perhaps distant home, and change the money<sup>2</sup> into sacrifices when the sanctuary is reached by him. There, too, the purpose of the law was best served by so far altering the law that had been best in the wilderness. Such things are specially good (because incidental) proofs of the correctness of the scriptural order of origination. It seems incredible that they should by "critics" (= men professing *judgment!*) have been made proof-samples of "discrepancy" between the two Codes ("There's a great deal of human nature in man").

Another "discrepancy" that disappears when looked at with clear eye is, with reference to *centralisation of worship*. In *Deuteronomy* (xii. 5, etc.) the centre is a to-be-fixed future thing, while the Priest Code assumes as a settled thing that the sanctuary is that centre. Yes: but in the wilderness it was a *movable* centre—of the camp. The *Deuteronomy* question is, What shall *permanently* be the place of the sanctuary? Here is no discrepancy, dislocating the record, but harmony of two

<sup>1</sup> Where *N.B.*, the juxtaposition of this principle to that regulation in *Leviticus*, is incidental proof of the *priority of Leviticus*, in which the principle is so placed.

<sup>2</sup> A memorable illustration of the primeval form of money, Lat. *pecunia*, from *pecus* = "cattle."

parts incidentally evidencing genuine authenticity of both. Of course it will not so appear to a high critic looking at the matter from "between his legs."

So as to the "discrepancy" between Ex. xx. 24 and later scriptural representations. It is *assumed* that Ex. xx. 24 legalises a discretionary plurality of local sanctuaries, or at least, a liberty relatively to place of altar sacrifice that is unlawful under the subsequent Codes. But (1) a certain laxity (cp. Amos v. 25) tolerated in the wilderness might be decisively terminated in Deuteronomy at the close of the wandering. (2) Also and especially,<sup>1</sup> the assumption is not warranted by fact. Apparently even the patriarchs did not place altars at discretion, but where, by theophany or other "sign," God had chosen to put His name. And the place, thus for the occasion made "holy ground" (Ex. iii. 5), did not thereby become a sanctuary in the now relevant sense of permanent local centre for common worship to the people in the region (or camp). *On the received view* the principle, exemplified in patriarchal practice, was in the Mosaic institute *applied*, suitably to the new condition, by the law of one sanctuary for the nation, in the manner now best fitted for the *purpose*,—exhibition of the monotheistic supernaturalism of alike the patriarchal and the national religion.

But appeal is taken to the practice, appearing in later history,—*Judges*, etc.,—of sacrificing away from the Canaan centre. In answer to which it is, *on the received view*, represented,—(1) That in the time of the Judges, Israel, not in full command of Canaan, might not be able to fully carry out the Mosaic constitution, *e.g.*, regarding central gatherings at national festivals, while in times of apostasy or backsliding there was much of sinful neglect of what admittedly was prescribed in the divine Mosaic law;—and that (2), in the northern kingdom, where political separation barred the way to Jerusalem, God's people, under prophetic guidance from Him, presumably fell back, more or less—in the exceptional exigency (cp. Matt. xii. 1–7)—on the patriarchal practice; as also may have more or less been the case in the undivided kingdom during the century after Eli's death, until, in Solomon's reign of peace, the ark, the true centre, obtained a settled home at Jerusalem;—while (3), in all the history before Josiah's time, though there are cases of censure and punishment on account of unauthorised sacrifice, there is no case of a sacrifice accepted by God where it is not reasonably presumable that He had "put His name"—through supernatural indication. All which is quite feasible explanation.

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 246–7.

Whether, however, every difficulty, in harmonising the received view with historical fact in Israelitish practice, can be removed by such explanations, will not be anxiously inquired by believing men of sense or gumption. And the destructive criticism has here brought a Balaam's blessing of corroboration to the received view, in proposing as its *alternative* the (very unlikely) story, that for so many centuries the peculiar people had a discretionary liberty of worshipping in high places, if not also of worshipping strange gods! A theory which *needs* that story is very questionable.

*Silence* in history does not prove non-existence of a law: witness the all but complete silence regarding the Passover, though the festival—even in the judgment of destructive critics—dates from before the passage of the Red Sea. It does not prove even non-observance: Dr. Robertson (*Israel's Early Religion*) adduces the Koran's making no reference to circumcision, though its antiquity among the Arabs as a sacred custom is far higher than the time of Mohammed. History<sup>1</sup> leaves unnoticed those things which—*e.g.* sunrise—no matter how important in a nation's life, are not in some way above the plane, or out of the line, of everyday occurrence. And the Bible has reference to this nation's life only in connection with the more comprehensive matter of God's kingdom in "the earth and the world."

But we again remember that our special question here is regarding the *story*, which the destructive criticism has to put in place of the scriptural account of the present matter,—a question which now has narrowed to the point as to *the essential nature* of whatever religion Israel had in the Mosaic age. And as to that, the theoretical story is waste and vacuity.<sup>2</sup> Some theorists, otherwise going with the revolutionary set, maintain the supernaturalism which, on the received view, is what constitutes the changeless essential nature of the Israelitish constitution. But the leaders now in our view—the leaders who lead, perhaps invisibly—do not, will not, really cannot leave that supernaturalism in the real history. Its presence there is a "let there be light," which destroys their theoretical "darkness on the face of the abyss." They *have to* put in a serpent where the scriptural account of

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 264, footnote, Note P, and Note on "Principal Cave," p. 326.



the matter puts in a dove (it is only this that will make their "criticism" differ from common infidelity). For *anti-supernaturalism* really is their principle of judgment and mainspring of movement (it is only this that makes their "criticism" differ from ordinary Christian study of the Scriptures);<sup>1</sup> while in the biblical Mosaic age a true supernaturalism, all-pervasive as the atmosphere and light, is constitutively essential, in such wise that without it the history would be "unthinkable," theoretically absurd as a story of spring-time without sun or of human life apart from vital air.

Accordingly, they cast the Bible infant Mosaism out of the Sinai cradle, and put a mere naturalistic changeling in its place. If in the real Mosaic age they own anything professedly supernatural,—in order, say, to account for subsequent *belief* in supernaturalism,—they do not own it as historically real, but perhaps ascribe it to imposture or gross delusion (2 Tim. iii. 13) on the part of Moses and his associates; who thus are made to meetly inaugurate the theoretical nation's experience of fraud and falsehood on the part of spiritual-minded prophets and zealous priests and pious kings. But even after they thus change, even in their own changeling Mosaism from dove to serpent (giving it a "*corrupt* nature—*Conf. of Faith*), they still are under a fatal necessity<sup>2</sup> of changing yet again and again, in the two grand movements of radical revolution:—1. their Deuteronomic concentration of worship and priesthood, if not also creation of nationality, changing the primeval triangle into square;<sup>3</sup> and,—2. rounding square into circle, their post-exilian creation of Messianic priesthood with atonement.

Reasons for that irrationalism, in the shape of scriptural difficulties alleged against the received view, we have passed from, perceiving in the nature of the case a reasonableness of accepting the thorny crown of difficulties in that scriptural view along with the Scripture itself. We now fix attention on the said irrationalism. It can be charged against the

<sup>1</sup> See above, footnote, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> FIRST STUDENT: "Every man shapes his own destiny." SECOND STUDENT: "Every man *is* his own destiny."

<sup>3</sup> See above, footnote, p. 264.

destructive criticism in question, in the following three particulars of changing the essential nature of Mosaism:—1. the theoretical Mosaism has not in it *the redeeming grace* which, represented by the priestly constitution, was expounded (cp. John i. 18) in the teaching of the prophets;—2. it has not in it *the real monotheism* which, represented by the Deuteronomy concentration of national worship, appeared in the national belief as a finally settled habit, as it were a mental second nature, at the return from exile; and,—3. in and through all, it lacks the true divine *supernaturalism*, of revelation and redemption by the one living God, which, represented by Israel's Passover and tabernacle (or temple) way of life, appeared in the deliverance from Egypt and Sinai consecration, as well as in the wonders and prophecies of Canaan,—the "river" (Ps. xlv. 4) which from the smitten Rock was ever in the city of Jehovah-God.

One ray of that supernaturalism shining in the history, glimmering through its veil (Luke ix. 31, 32), destroys the Apollyon criticism in its life of life. Thus, with reference to *the Passover*.—The theorising strives to level that festival down into mere naturalism, making it to be natively and essentially only a festive social meal in connection with the good fruits of the earth and man's life thereby sustained and cheered. This is to the criticism a necessity of existence. Accordingly it strives to make the *historical* reference of the festival, to a salvation of Israel's firstborn in Egypt, an importation belonging to a period long after the Mosaic age. True, in *Deuteronomy* the historical reference is clear and distinct,—with the name (*pēsach*), "Passover," which has no other meaning; in *Exodus*, which has the name (*mazzōth*) "unleavened bread," the historical reference appears distinctly at chap. xxxiv. (18, 20, cp. Ex. xxiii. 15), which these critics place, along with *The Book of the Covenant*, two centuries before *Deuteronomy*; and between the two dates a corresponding general view, of dependence of present religion on a divine law from the Mosaic past, appears in *Hosca* and *Amos*, whom they own as unquestionably authentic, making them the earliest extant writing prophets, on a solidly clear historic ground.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "His (Dr. Robertson's) *literary* argument places Israel, before the Hilkiah "find," with two prophets and The Book of the Covenant plus

All these, *their only primary witnesses*, not only themselves make the historical reference, but make it in such a manner as to show that it is *in the nation's mind*, as a habit of its looking toward the primeval past, from "days of old." Yet the critics reject the testimony. They even dismember one of the witnesses, cutting a section of *Exodus* (xiii.) out of its place (cp. John ix. 20), where it is monumental verification of the historical reference; and they cast down *Joel* from his erst antiquity alongside of *Amos* and *Hosea*, where his evidence for that reference is overwhelming in its fulness. Why do these things? Because the historical reference destroys their theorising, by placing a real supernaturalism, of revelation and redemption, in Israelitish recollection and in prophetic representation of the Mosaic age, long before Josiah's time—not to speak of the exile time:—that is, placing in the period between Josiah and the exodus an Israel, and Israelitish condition of thought regarding religion and history, essentially different from what the theorising demands. And in so intending murder, the criticism again falls into suicide. For if it succeed here, what is the result?

All that violence against the most ancient witnesses will inevitably, if successful, furnish *clear proof that the theoretical "evolution" is not a real evolution, but a radical revolution*, changing the essential nature of the exodus religion, putting an essentially different thing in place of it. A Mosaic Passover that is merely naturalistic is essentially different, not only from the Passover of exilian and later times, but from that of *Deuteronomy*, and of the earliest writing prophets before it, and of Ex. xxxiv. before them. In it, the supernaturalism in question is fundamentally essential. And here consequently, for the theorists, *the only Passover known*

Ex. xxxiv., all authentically looking back to Sinai, and seeing their springs in the smitten rock. But he refuses to make anything of the fact, that this Israel is a *monumental* nation (Isa. xliii. 10), and its prophets, its apostles, its Christ, have ostensibly borne *authoritative* testimony regarding origination in the Mosaic age; and he fails to show cause for other men's disregarding this ground of judgment (= "criticism"), and restricting themselves to grounds accepted by negative critics. He also fails to show *how* or *when* the Scriptures and the institutions can have originated after the Mosaic age, *without* fraud and falsehood, forgery and imposture, which he repudiates" (MS. *Letter to an Australasian friend*).

*historically* has yet another dilemma. *Either* this is essentially the Mosaic Passover, *or* it is not: if it be, then the exodus religion was essentially supernaturalistic as that of later ages; and if it be not, then the religion of those later ages cannot have originated in evolution from the exodus religion. In either case, the theorising is destroyed in its foundation.

So over all, without that violence which is disproof of real evolution—"catastrophic"—the "scientific" history will not move on. Beginning with a Mosaism that has not in it the smitten Rock (1 Cor. x. 4) of a true divine supernaturalism, the theorising has to bring in as *vera causa*—the distinctively efficient agency—in its historical movement a truly *undivine* supernaturalism<sup>1</sup> of (as we saw) human fraud and falsehood, forgery and imposture, "*These* be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of Egypt"?<sup>2</sup> The theorising, so far from "scientifically" accounting for the Bible and its history, really shuts criticism out of both.<sup>3</sup> And, in reducing itself to absurdity, it furnishes—we repeat—new proof of the scriptural account of the matter,<sup>4</sup>—or, indirectly, new proof that the scriptural supernaturalism is historically real, so that the Bible religion must needs be true and divine.

The half-way view, which makes the origination of the institutions or of the Scriptures to be more or less post-Mosaic yet supernatural, is not, of course, on principle in league with anti-supernaturalism. But on the part of the received view it is an essentially important question with reference to the half-way view, On what *ground* it stops there? Is it, *e.g.*, a ground of compromise with mere naturalism, "throwing tit-bits to the lion"?<sup>5</sup> If it be, then it is only a lack of logical persistency that keeps the alpha of mere naturalism from showing itself (Jas. i. 15) in omega fruits of matured anti-supernaturalism; and where the fathers eat sour grapes the children's teeth are set on edge.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 219-20.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Note L.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. above, pp. 247-8.

<sup>4</sup> By further showing that there is *no other possible* rational, that is, real, account of the matter.

<sup>5</sup> Cp., or rather contrast, dealing with lion and bear on the part of the "man after God's own heart."

<sup>6</sup> See Notes J, K, M.



*The master argument* for the received view, on the ground of *the authority* of Christ and His apostles,<sup>1</sup> is not really out of sight of our apologetic history, though for mere naturalism it should have no weight. No doubt for Christians it is an important inquiry, what view of the Old Testament is, *irrespective of New Testament evidence*, justly deducible from the Old Testament itself. But for them and for all men there is an ulterior question, what is *the truth* as to the Old Testament,—a question regarding which the testimony of Christ and His apostles is adduced.<sup>2</sup>

We will suppose that there is no question as to the fact, that those founders of Christianity (Eph. ii. 20) so assumed and proceeded on the received view regarding the Old Testament in their public ministry, as to make themselves responsible for that view before mankind. With reference to this fact, opponents of the received view have found it necessary to say or to suggest, that either those founders were mistaken about this matter—of the scriptural “foundation” of man’s life in believing God—or,<sup>3</sup> knowing the truth about it, they *accommodated* their utterances to suit mistaken Jewish views of it,—that is, put on their teaching a face of believing what they knew to be untrue. Men of sense, whether Christian or not, will judge for themselves whether *that* is a likely story.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, Book i.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Note G.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> “There is another topic connected with the canon of the Old Testament, which has of late attracted some notice, and is entitled to some share of your attention, and this is the attack that has been made upon the authenticity and canonicity of many of the books, and upon large portions of the history of the Old Testament, by a series of German writers, some of whom have brought to the work a large amount of learning, accompanied generally with a miserable lack of common sense and sound logic. The principles upon which they usually proceed in this matter are these: The testimony of Christ and His apostles to the divine authority of the Old Testament, and to the integrity of the Jewish canon, is of no weight, for they either shared in the ignorance and error which generally prevailed among their countrymen in regard to the origin and character of their sacred books, or, though they had the discernment and sagacity to perceive the absurdity of the prevalent Jewish notions upon these subjects, they, to avoid offence, professed to concur in them, and usually spoke as if they believed in their truth and soundness. . . . The books of the Old Testament have, however, stood without injury this the most formidable assault that has ever been made upon them. In the

Clericus<sup>1</sup> sought to support that story by contending,—“Since Christ and His apostles did not come into the world to teach biblical criticism, there is no wonder they express themselves in accordance with vulgar opinions.”<sup>2</sup> Witsius, replying, in a passage to be presently quoted, pointed at this as “profane” (cp. Heb. xii. 15, 16); and more recent utterances in similar terms on the part of professing Christians have been similarly censured. In the judgment of charity, they can be construed as confusedly meaning, that the founders of Christianity, in their utterances bearing on this matter, employed conventional phraseology—as when an astronomer speaks of “sunrise”—without intending to teach for doctrine what the phraseology implies if taken literally. But *N.B.*,—*the Jews really believed* what is implied in the utterances at present in question. And Le Clerc’s contending is now answered, as it was by Witsius, that, though those founders were not teachers of criticism (as they were not teachers of logic), yet *they were teachers regarding the scriptural rule of faith and practice, and in that capacity bore a definite positive testimony, regarding the Old Testament in general and the Pentateuch in particular, which they placed at the foundation of the true religion.*

1. *As to their possibly being mistaken about the matter.*—A man’s not being omniscient (Mark xiii. 32) does not imply that he can be mistaken, *e.g.*, in “speaking as he is moved by the

legitimate department of the lower criticism the evidence adduced to disprove the genuineness of particular books of the Old Testament has been subjected to a thorough investigation, and been proved to be utterly insufficient to serve the purpose for which it was brought forward; and in the department of the higher criticism, the folly, capriciousness, and recklessness of those who applied this test have been so fully exposed, that [this was before the Graf *resuscitation* of Vatkeism, see above, p. 272, etc.] even in Germany it is now generally abandoned to contempt.”—Cunningham, at p. 423 of the work referred to in footnote above, p. 195. The lectures were prepared immediately after the Disruption of 1843. The present quotation is given as a sample utterance of sense or gumption. Its moral characterisation resembles that of Welsh and Witsius in quotations below. Its critical divination is illustrated by the history referred to above at p. 272, etc.

<sup>1</sup> He honourably retracted his teaching, being convinced by the reasoning of Witsius (see above, p. 253, etc.).

<sup>2</sup> Donaldson’s Translation of Witsius, see below.

Holy Ghost" (John xiv. 10, xvi. 13). And in His recorded public ministry Jesus never speaks as merely a man, but always as the Christ, the Son of God (John vii. 16, viii. 28).

—2. *As to "accommodation,"*<sup>1</sup>—it is painful to have to remind professing Christians of the fact, that (1 Cor. v. 7, 8) the very life's bread of this religion is sincerity and truth, and <sup>2</sup> those

<sup>1</sup> With reference to such "accommodation," as alleged by German anti-supernaturalists, Dr. Welsh, moderator of the Scottish Disruption Assembly of 1843—"Twass fifty years ago"—wrote, in his *Elements of Church History*, as follows:—

"The compatibility of such deceit with the character of virtue was agreeable to the current system of morals, and corresponded with the practice of the rationalists themselves, who professed themselves defenders and preachers of the Christian doctrine, while devoting their lives to its overthrow,—their philosophers of highest name (as Kant) defending this course of conduct. It is hoped that a better spirit is beginning to prevail. [See footnotes above, pp. 249, 264.] In regard to the whole system of accommodation, I heartily go along with the following statement by Ullmann:—' . . . To suppose that Christ accommodated Himself to the errors of His time, with the knowledge that they were errors, implies that the origin of Jesuitism may be traced back to Jesus Himself'" (pp. 152, 153).

This singularly precious volume is only a first part—down to Constantine's accession, A.D. 312—given to the world A.D. 1844, of the author's intended work, which was broken off by his death not long after. He was Cunningham's colleague in the Edinburgh New College, under Chalmers as principal, but had been Professor of Church History in the University when they all sacrificed their livings for what they regarded as truth. It was by his hand—as moderator—that there was tabled the Protest, in which the sacrifice for conscience toward God was declared. He was deeply versed in the learning of philosophy, patristics, and classics, as Cunningham was in that of more positive theology and ecclesiasticism, and "Rabbi" Duncan in Semitic lore. What a theological faculty the Disruption Church was able to extemporise in her birth year! There is not one of the four that was not, in his own independent way, a true master, essentially unique in British history of Christian thought; and surely such a combination in one theological school has rarely appeared in Christian history. The present writer may be allowed to make this observation as having been personally a pupil of Cunningham and Duncan. In such labours as the present he has been always deeply indebted also to the tuition of Dr. Bannerman, who had come to be their colleague,—represented in literature by his books on Inspiration and on The Church,—who, like Dr. James Buchanan, was of the type of that "first four" in respect of maturity of rich thought and belief, and clear, solid strength of judgment, as well as affluence of digested and really mastered knowledge of his subjects.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 17.

founders of it, so far from "shaping"<sup>1</sup> their testimony regarding Scripture to suit relative Jewish errors regarding it, openly and unshrinkingly opposed such errors,—opposition which was one occasion of the Jewish hostility that drove out the apostles and nailed Christ on the cross. And their testimony regarding the matter was not a mere fencing with Jews, but a so far founding of Christendom in the new dispensation.

Witsius, admired as an Old Testament Hebrew scholar in that age of real great scholars, was conspicuous by a candid mildness and charity in controversy. All the more remarkable on that account is the strength of his feeling in the following extract:<sup>2</sup>—

"Woe betide that audacious and reckless criticism, whose religion it is to prefer—as it admits—its own guesses to the authority of Christ and His apostles! Yes, indeed! Christ and His apostles were not teachers of the science of criticism, such as these opponents of ours demand to be esteemed,—claiming a sort of literary sovereignty<sup>3</sup> in every branch of human knowledge whatever. Teachers of TRUTH they nevertheless were, nor did they suffer themselves to be imposed on either by ignorance of men or the craft of great men of their time. Of a surety they did not come into the world to cherish common errors, and, by their authority, to protect them; nor did they scatter broadcast the seeds of truth among the Jews alone, but also among the peoples [Gentiles] peculiarly dependent upon them. To finish by one statement, I maintain that that man, in whose heart the religion of Christ is, with whom the authority of Christ and His apostles is sacred, will far more joyfully bind his faith to them in their references to Moses as the author of the Pentateuch than to any mob what or where soever, of Hobbists, Spinozists, Simonists, Le Clercs, and the whole rabble of profane critics, with their audacious and reckless conjectures."

An aspect of the matter glanced at by Witsius, but bearing with peculiar fulness<sup>4</sup> on the special "mission" of

<sup>1</sup> See footnote above, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> *Donaldson's Translation*—Edinburgh, 1880—of Witsius's Dissertation on the Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch (first published A.D. 1691, in vol. i. of Witsius's *Miscellanea*,—2nd ed., improved and enlarged, A.D. 1696).

<sup>3</sup> Witsius has *regnum*—"kingship"—evidently meaning *autocracy*—as if infallible popery of bookishness.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.*, with reference to Witsius's point about the *Gentiles*, as in a special manner and measure dependent on the testimony of Christ and His apostles.



Christianity in our more recent time,<sup>1</sup> is very seasonably illustrated in the following extract from a statement on the present subject by the Bishop of Colchester:—

“If the view of the extreme rationalists robs us of an important element in Christian education, not less does it paralyse our efforts in the vast and ever-growing field of Christian missions. We cannot send our missionaries to the heathen with the New Testament only in their hands; or, if that were possible, our converts, when able to read the Gospels and Epistles for themselves, would naturally ask for some account of those older Scriptures which they would there find so constantly quoted and referred to. Imagine, then, the position of a missionary obliged to tell those whom he has admitted, or was about to admit, into the fold of Christ’s Holy Catholic Church, that while one portion of the Bible, which he could not withhold from them, was true and genuine, the other and larger portion was only fabrication and fable, leading up to and preparing for the later, and indeed only real revelation, simply in the sense (if there is such a sense) in which the stories of King Lear or King Arthur may be said to prepare the minds of children for authentic history.<sup>2</sup> Already the question has been significantly asked by one representing the extreme left wing of rationalism, ‘Why should we unteach our converts Hindoo mythology, only to teach them Hebrew mythology instead?’ Why indeed!”<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Bloomfield, in the statement here quoted from, resolutely maintains the competency of men who are not technically scholars to judge for themselves in this Bible question; and his own present contribution to discussion on the merits of it is expressly on the footing of simply an educated Christian man who does not claim to be a specialist in Old Testament Hebrew lore. It became one in the highest rank of Christian leadership and teaching to direct attention to the bearing of the matter on the “founding” (Eph. ii. 20) of Christianity among heathen populations. And his impressive suggestion, of a conceivable practical impossibility of really establishing the new kingdom on a basis that excludes

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Duff, “the prince of missionaries,” said to the present writer, in answer to the question, How the new critical views would work in India? that they would be simply ruinous, destroying the foundations.

<sup>3</sup> *Contemporary Review*, June 1892, p. 874,—the second of two articles, “Professor Driver on the Old Testament.”

the divine authority of the Old Scripture, brings up with a fresh vividness the *status questionis*, If we refuse to be "built on the foundation of the prophets," *can* we be built on "that of the apostles," or have "Jesus Christ Himself" as "the chief corner-stone"?<sup>1</sup>

Witsius joyfully made due acknowledgment of Le Clerc's honourableness in retraction. This became one so revered as he still is—among Christians of the type of Toplady and Mr. Donaldson of Ceres—on account of evangelical unction sanctifying his erudition and masterly ability. And his discussion of the present question has—when reproduced—been found in substance really seasonable for the present need. But it is to be noted in the above extract from it that he sees no half-way house between denying the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and in that connection effectively disowning the authority of Christ and His apostles. The distinction which now is fully recognised<sup>2</sup> between denying the Mosaic authorship of the Scriptures and denying their divine authority, had not then come into recognition as in our day. In our day, on the other hand, under cover of the distinction, there may be an evasion of the question as to the bearing of *that* authority (Matt. xxviii. 18–20), which is the foundation of Christendom, on the whole question regarding Old Testament Scriptures and institutions.

With reference, however, to a point comparatively new, regarding which there is not full unanimity among intelligently sincere defenders of evangelical Christianity, it may be well for all parties to consider the following utterance emitted in another connection:—"Brethren, I count not myself to have yet apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise, even this God shall reveal unto you. Only, whereunto we have already attained, by that let us walk" (Phil. iii. 14–16).

<sup>1</sup> The whiff of cold wind about mission work from the ice-land of rationalism reminds us of "rax-me-that-Bible" Dr. Erskine's experience of a kindred region relatively to mission work almost exactly a century before (see above, p. 192).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Notes on "Dr. Binnie" and "Professor Robertson."

## EPILOGUE.

THE supplementary section has been much rewritten, but in its allusions conforms to the beginning of 1894, as date of the completion of the work. Here, as elsewhere, the writer has disregarded the weak worldliness of the exhortation to Horatius, that he should strike soft, instead of striking down, when on the bridge defending "the ashes of his fathers and the altars of his gods." But he disclaims allusion to individuals excepting where individuals are named or distinctly indicated. A reader may naturally see allusion to individuals who, in connection with this or that matter in question, are much in *his* mind and presumably not absent from the writer's. But the reference may be only to classes or types; and the individuals—if any—immediately in the writer's view are all but certainly *not* those whom an English or a Scottish reader would most naturally think of.

In three distinct works the writer has dealt with one subject, of historical apologetics, though from different points of view; and in the present work he has dealt with apologetics as, while appearing in historically varied articulations, yet always being the same in substance. There thus is repetition, extending even to phrases and illustrations. The writer may not have fully succeeded in avoiding iteration really needless; and he may not have been duly solicitous to veil the appearance of it where the reality was called for. But—witness the Bible, the grand model of teaching, with its continual *vetus in novo patet*—repetition rightly used is a most valuable means of exposition for placing a matter fully and fairly in the mind of those addressed.

The amount of space occupied respectively by the successive chapters in the work goes on expanding as in the apocalyptic panorama of the seven seals; and the final section places the Old Testament question as if at last alone in a great historical movement like the Exodus erection of the Tabernacle. This expansion may have been occasioned by the nature of the movement in the studies as historical, like a river's expanding through gain of ever-new accessions while retaining all the past.

For the practical purpose of apologetics, if we lose the past in the present, it ought to be in order to more fully find it there. The past is abidingly important, not only as historically introducing the present, but because it is in elucidations of the remotest past that often the present has to look for solution of its most recent problems. In the present case a certain completeness, or needed balance,<sup>1</sup> has come unsought through emphasis now laid on the Old Testament (veiled Christianity), correspondingly to special emphasis laid on (Moses unveiled) the New Testament at earlier stages—*e.g.*, in Book i.

<sup>1</sup> "There is an ideal balance of Christian theology; and the Old Testament, it seems to me, more than anything else, is needed to restore that balance—not the Old as contrasted with the New, but the Old Testament as being the ground and foundation of the New, the rock whence it was hewn, and the pit whence it was digged."—Professor Sanday, *Contemp. Rev.*, July 1889, "The Future of English Theology."



## APPENDICES.



### APPENDIX TO SEC. 1, CHAP. I., BOOK I.

#### *Observations on "Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,"*

Luke xii. 10.

HERE we will only, for our special purpose, coast in shallows along the shore of a deep sea.

1. *What makes the sin in question at Luke xii. 10 is not simply "blaspheming," but must be something in the circumstance of its being "against the Holy Ghost."* The Greek "blaspheme" (*lit.* = "evil-speak") has the general meaning of, uttering *defamatory speech*, or speech otherwise revolting to pious feeling, especially with reference to deity or to sacred things (Matt. ix. 3; Acts xiii. 45). The evangelists employ it with reference to such utterance regarding Christ: *e.g.*, at Matt. xxvii. 39, where A.V. has "reviled Him"—on the cross; and at Mark xv. 29, A.V. and R.V. have "railed on" Him—there. So at Luke xxii. 65, where He is on trial before the high priest. In the post-apostolic "period of the persecutions," *blaspheme Christ* was the Greek equivalent of the Latin *Christum maledicere*, *lit.* "to evil-speak Christ" (*cp.* "malediction"). This, in judicial procedure of the heathen world-empire against professing Christians, meant, *denying* or *disowning* Him, *recanting* or *abjuring* His religion.<sup>1</sup>

This is in the line of what Christ Himself says at Luke xii. 10,—"*Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man [lit. as if, 'throw a word at Him'—cp. Ex. xi. 7], it shall be forgiven him.*" And it is fully borne out by the terms of His general declaration at Mark iii. 28,—"*Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme.* But he

<sup>1</sup> See in Pliny's *Letter to Trajan* regarding the Bithynian Christians, A.D. 110.

that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of [lies under] eternal damnation.”<sup>1</sup> So the matter is placed by God’s here revealed *will*: whether by His will it might not have been otherwise placed, we do not now inquire.

This perhaps remotely bears on apology on the principle set forth at Matt. xii. 37, that a man’s mouth shows what is innermost in his heart and life (see, *e.g.*, Isa. lvi. 10). At least, here we are in the region of the *ethics* of witness-bearing as to religion.

2. The “blaspheming” in question may not be *consciously* aimed at the third Person of the Godhead. The sinner may not even have that Person in his mind. “A word against the Son of Man,” which the persecuting heathen might speak of as a *blaspheming Christ*, might involve the guilt for which there is no expiation; but if in any case it should involve that guilt, yet the professing Christian in that case, denying Christ, might have in his mind no more thought of the Holy Ghost in particular than the heathens had in theirs. The lapsed in the Lyonese persecution, when they went back to confession on the way to martyrdom, were welcomed by the faithful (cp. “welcome to your gory bed!”); and Peter found “place for repentance” after he had perpetrated The Great Denial; but Paul (1 Tim. i. 12) seems to see, as an ideal possibility, that *he*, “a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious,” might have sinned beyond reach of mercy,—though presumably (see Acts ix. 5) he at that time had no thought of opposition to the Holy Ghost.

It is conceivable that the blasphemy, on the part of one who in his mind has no thought of that Person, should yet *be* distinctively against that Person (Heb. x. 29) in the sense of being in a special manner opposed (Acts vii. 51) to Him, though (cp. Luke ix. 55) not in a consciousness of the opposedness *to Him*. The Jews, ascribing Christ’s miracle of exorcism to His employing Satanic agency, did not *mean* to say in other words, that Beelzebub was employed for man’s deliverance by the Holy Spirit of Jehovah. Nevertheless they really blasphemed against that person of the Trinity, by ascribing what in fact was distinctively *His* work to Beelzebub, so as (cp. Acts x. 38) to identify that holy God, who (John xiv. 11) dwelt and worked in the Messiah, with an unclean demon of the pit. Similarly as to the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v. 3, 4). We need not suppose that, in lying to God the Holy Ghost,

<sup>1</sup> The R.V. English here, “is guilty of an eternal sin,” is nonsensical. It can be seen in the Greek that the guilt is=*reatus pœnæ* and not only *reatus culpæ*, and remains all through the (*æon*) “ever.”

they had Him in their view as a person to be imposed upon by their mean pretence. And in saying (Eph. iv. 30), "grieve not the Holy Ghost" (*e.g.* by "falsehood" or other "corrupt speech"—vers. 25, 29), or in saying (1 Thess. v. 19), "quench not the Spirit" (? *e.g.* by "despising prophesyings"—ver. 20),—Paul need not be understood as referring to *intentional antagonism* toward the third Person of the Godhead on the part of the Christians he is addressing. He may mean only that a native *tendency* of the kind of action he warns against,—violating the bond of Christian fellowship or throwing cold water on spiritual movement,—is, to grieve that Spirit of truth and grace as with a painful personal offence, so occasioning withdrawal of His enlightening and quickening operative presence from them in His anger (see the "for" at Heb. x. 30).

Here we seem to see at least an approach toward our subject of apology, in the references, in connection with outward utterance, or action on the community, to an *inward frame of mind* that is revoltingly offensive to that Spirit, who through His gracious operations is the innermost life of religion in man's heart. That inward frame—rotten-hearted falseness (cp. 1 Cor. i. 7, 8)—may appear (2 Tim. iv. 1-4) in putting a false face of worldliness (Col. ii. 8) on the religion under the name of "answering" for it to the world—thus effectively betraying it with a kiss—or (Isa. lvi. 10) in being silent where "silence gives consent" to accusation of it. It is in *this* direction that Christ points the saying (Matt. xii. 30), "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth" (mark the "therefore" at ver. 31).

3. As to the representation of this matter(?) in the *two famous passages in Hebrews* ostensibly referring to it,—vi. 4-6, x. 25-29. They have immediate reference to lapsing or apostasy; and they very powerfully set forth as the revolting thing in that sin, *the dishonour done to Immanuel slain for us* (as to the expression "blaspheming" Him—on the cross—see again Matt. xxvii. 39; Mark xv. 29). And this, on the part of the lapsed or apostate, they set forth as resulting in *irretrievableness* of spiritual ruin:—either (Heb. vi.) in a "second death" of *insensibility* (Jude, 12) in the sinful soul; or (Heb. x.) in a second death of *condemnation* (cp. Rev. xxi. 8) on account of the criminality of the sin. In so speaking of an irretrievably ruinous *consequence* of lapse or apostasy, they remind us of what Christ said about blaspheming against the Holy Ghost in connection with witness-bearing as to religion. (Here, as there, the question is not raised, whether it might not be otherwise if God so *willed*.)

The consequence of the sin is in the two passages exhibited

in two distinct aspects. At Heb. vi. 4-6 what we see is, as it were, a *natural* consequence, as when foul deadly disease is brought on a man by indulgence in vice; while what we see at Heb. x. 25-29 is a *penal* consequence, like Gehazi's plague of leprosy.<sup>1</sup>

The representation of the criminality of apostasy at Heb. x. 25-29 resembles the representation at Luke xii. 5-12 with reference to witness-bearing in the form of confession which culminates in apology: *e.g.*, in bringing to view all the three Persons of the Godhead as distinctly sinned against (the Father here—Heb. x.—in the reference to “Moses’ law”); and also, and especially, in making Christ equivalent to the religion of the living God. It is the aggravated criminality of apostasy *from Christ* that is illustrated by comparison with “despising Moses’ law”; and the culminating point of aggravation is constituted by the fact of its being “*the Son of God*” who is trampled under foot by the apostasy, that it is *His* blood—the blood (of the covenant)—in its great office of making the Church to be “a peculiar people,” a holy nation of the Redeemer,—that is contemptuously treated as a common thing. That same fact is made the culminating point of aggravation in the otherwise dissimilar representation of the consequence of the lapsing at Heb. vi. 4-6, where the lapsed are said to have crucified *the Son of God*, and “put *Him* to open shame.” It was exhibited with an awful vividness (Matt. xxi. 33-44) in Christ’s own parting parable to the apostatising Israel of His day: where mark the point (ver. 37), “They will reverence *my son*” (cp. Ps. ii.)

The representation of a—so to speak—*natural* consequence

<sup>1</sup> This distinction, of a penal from a natural consequence in the soul’s life, is illustrated by a difference between Paul’s two famous utterances regarding a “second death” in the moral condition of heathens, Rom. i. 18-32 and Eph. iv. 18, 19. In both we see an insensibility to truth and goodness, which is a consequence of atheism, and which appears in enormities of outbreathing wickedness, revolting to the ordinary feelings of even unregenerate mankind (moral *monstrosity*). But at Eph. iv. 19 the “past feeling” appears as if a simply natural consequence of godlessness, as the physical world would die in absence of the sun: the atheists “*giving themselves*” over to enormities of uncleanness;—while at Rom. i. it is shown that the moral deadness, which breaks out in the enormities, is a *punishment* of the *crime* of atheism, in its rejection of a light of God. Instead of a *self*-abandonment to shameful practices, on the part of man, what now comes into view is a *judicial* abandonment of the sinful men on God’s part:—“*God giving them over*,” to uncleanness, vileness, reprobacy (the Greek for “giving over” or “up” is the same at Rom. i. 24, 26, 28, and at Eph. iv. 19).



at Heb. vi. 4-6 brings into view a natively *deadening process in the soul*,—in lapsing from a condition of spiritual enlightenment, and feeling, and movement, into irretrievableness of dark and stark insensibility, such that the apostate, once dead in sin (Eph. ii. 1-3; Rom. v. 12) by inheritance from Adam, now is “twice dead” through destruction of a sensibility to the things of God in the word of His kingdom, that was evoked in him by “the Spirit of grace” (so—cp. Heb. vi. 7, 8—in the cases of the thorny-ground and the stony-ground hearers, *Parable of the Sower*). Here (*N.B.* the “crucified to themselves the Son of God”) there is, through trampling on an *inward light* of life in the soul, a consequent suicidal extinction of that life, effacement or obliteration of the capacity of feeling, as in the *cauterising*<sup>1</sup> of a conscience that is “seared as with a hot iron.” As in a wasted soil, the ruin is now beyond remedy. There is no healing balm in Gilead. The “season of grace” is gone, past hope of its returning. There is no possibility of renewal unto repentance (cp. Luke xix. 41-44). Such is the *native tendency* (cp. Heb. vi. 9) of that against which the Hebrew Christians here are warned. (Whether *Omnipotence*—Matt. xix. 26—is not capable of retrieving that ruin, if God so *willed*—Matt. viii. 2—is not here the question.)

The process within the soul, thus deadly in its native result, is *in its nature suicidal*, being a *violence to the innermost life* of whatever of religion has come into that soul through the gospel. Above all, as involving a *base disloyalty to Christ*, the inward movement in lapse or apostasy goes to destroy (see Matt. vii. 6) in the heart all real possibility of adoring love to Christ, without which the man who once has known Him is truly “nigh unto cursing” (see 1 Cor. xvi. 22). And that poisoning of the soul’s blood, through the base disloyalty’s working inward on the apostate’s moral character, is glanced at in the description at Heb. x. 29, of dishonouring Christ as at the same time a “doing despite unto the Spirit of grace.” For,—

He who *now* slays Christ on the cross destroys life’s true light in his own soul. The tender strength of a true Christian feeling that is revolted by the disloyalty to Christ crucified, is illustrated in an early Church tradition regarding Peter’s martyrdom.<sup>2</sup> At first sight (so runs the legend) of the infamous pain set before him, though “the spirit was willing” yet (again) “the flesh was weak,” and he fled from the cross.

<sup>1</sup> The rendering, “branded in their own conscience,” as if *self-condemned*, puts (legitimately ?) quite a different meaning into this clause of 1 Tim. iv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> As to the intended effect of which, see John xxi. 19; cp. 1 Pet. iv. 14, 13.

But in the shameful flight he was met by Christ (cp. Heb. xii. 1-4 and iv. 14-16), now entering the battlefield *he* was leaving. When Peter asked the Master, why He now was come down from His throne, Christ answered, that He was come "to be crucified afresh." Whereupon (cp. Luke xxii. 32, 62) the disciple saw, and went back to "the death" by which it was appointed that he should "glorify God." In the Christian mind in which that legend grew, no infamous pain of martyrdom was a thing to be weighed against the "shame, and everlasting contempt," which are the due reward of a professing Christian's baseness in at the testing time dishonouring Him, who for man's redemption "endured the cross, despising the shame" (see Phil. ii. 5-11).

At Heb. x. 29 the expression "suppose ye" is, in view of that revoltingness of base disloyalty, an appeal to *our* feeling of its deserving,—as compared, *e.g.*, with open disrespect to Moses' law, recognised as justly meriting a merciless severity of death-punishment. And the common feeling thus appealed to is illustrated by another anecdote of the Lyonnese persecution. The faithful witnesses, ready "to die for the name of the Lord Jesus," were (says our informant<sup>1</sup>) visibly confident, and even jubilant, as if shining with oil of gladness, in elation of "the joy of martyrdom, and the hope of the promises, and the Spirit of the Father" (cp. Phil. ii. 15-17); while on the other hand the few "lapsed" were, in their aspect and bearing, pictures of abjectly despairing misery, of remorseful self-loathing and self-contempt: even the guards and executioners, heathens though they were, did not conceal their scorn of the Christians who so proved untrue when tried (cp. 1 Pet. i. 7, iv. 12).

And in *such* a baseness God sees the sin that hath never forgiveness,—the *crime* supreme, with reference to which in particular it is to be noted (cp. Acts xiii. 46), that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. x. 26). It does not follow that *we* can see it in individual cases, though we may take warning from the general nature of the scriptural representation of it. Into the essence of the crime, against Immanuel Christ,—His blood shed for us and Spirit striving in us,—there enters its being a "sinning wilfully after" the sinner has "received the knowledge of the truth." But the Lyonnese "lapsed" found, like Peter, "place for repentance." And we are not qualified nor called to judge in particular cases whether that essential criminality, of base disloyalty in desertion of the good cause, has really placed the sinner, as if he had died in his sins, beyond

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 15.

the reach of God's forgiving mercy. That can be known only to Him, as it wholly depends on His unrevealed will regarding individuals. Judas, in executing judgment on himself (see a "Thought" of John Foster about condemning and executing one's self), thus was guilty of presumption as arrogating a right of judgment in the case. But we can see the *direction* in which the warnings point, so as to be able to descry the *region* in which the sin against the Holy Ghost is to be apprehended, namely, the region of a disciple's failing to duly honour Christ by open persistent confession of Him; on the part of those who have once attained to some real knowledge and feeling of "the word," "the word of God," "the word of the kingdom" (*Parable of the Sower*—Matt., Mark, Luke). Open confession of Him is (Rom. x. 9, 10) as it were a primary instinct of the heart which believeth unto righteousness, as it is the instinct of birds to sing in the sunrise. And unfaithfulness in that matter is opposition to the Spirit whose great work in man is (John xvi. 14) *to glorify Christ*, convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

The introduction of the subject, for salutary deterrent warning in connection with confession, is *a fact* in the very fountain of New Testament history of apologetics. It may in this connection be a particular application of the deterrent principle, relatively to all the militant life of the new kingdom (Phil. ii. 12, 13), "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for *it is God that worketh in you*, sovereignly, both the willing and the doing." But no doubt the connection in which the subject is placed by Scripture, both in the Gospels and in *Hebrews*, implies that the peril we are warned against is in some way specially connected with *profession* of the true religion: in the form both of steadfast adherence to the Church's communion and of resolute open maintenance of her great heritage of truth regarding God in Christ (1 Tim. ii. 15). And in any case the warning is for such as, in the matter of effective witness-bearing for the Bible and its religion, might appear as if experimenting on close approaches to the sin that hath never forgiveness. The warning is,—leave that *region*, shun the region, which has poison in its air, making poison to the soul's blood. Do not presume on *the infinity* of the expiatory value of the blood of Jesus, and *the omnipotence* of the new-creative Spirit. By *the will* of God—"the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost"—a man may be placed beyond all saving efficacy of either the Spirit or the blood, without raising any question of their *intrinsic* all-sufficiency.

## APPENDIX TO SEC. 3, CHAP. I., BOOK II.

*As to The Apostles' Creed.*

Bishop Lightfoot, the highest authority in our time with reference to second century Christianity, says (*Supernatural Religion*) that the Irenæan view<sup>1</sup> of the substantive doctrine of Christianity is effectively the doctrinal view that has ever since been held by the community of Christians upon earth. "The Apostles' Creed" (not under that name) appears in Irenæus, and later in Tertullian, not simply as an expression of the writer's individual belief, but especially as representing the general belief of Christians at the time and from the past. Its terms are not exactly the same in the two writers, and in both the terms differ somewhat from the form that has become stereotyped. The variety in form, which it thus is seen freely assuming at the outset, is proof, that natively and originally it was not, like the doctrinal "definitions" (= "*determinations*") of the later-primitive "age of the Councils" regarding the person of Christ and the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, set in stereotype of dogmatic Church authority. But as a "form of sound words" it exhibited, with permissible variation in details of expression, the substance of what was believed all over the second century;—not only at Lyons or in Gaul, and at Carthage or in North Africa, but everywhere in what Irenæus elsewhere calls "the catholic Church" (*i.e.*, as appears from the connection, the Church "throughout the world"). The substantive inviolate unity of the Church's body of doctrine, from the apostles downward, was fervently contended for by Tertullian in the Latin Church as it had been resolutely maintained as a sacred thing by Greek Irenæus. This (witness Tertullian's famous *præscriptio*) is the meaning of their contention against heresy on the ground of tradition;—namely, that there is a *settled Church doctrine*, such that what is alien to it is *eo ipso* shown to be untrue. And no doubt *The Apostles' Creed*, in elementary outline, really represents that doctrine.

While no doubt substantially representing the theological mind of the second century Church all the world over, it also substantially represents, in a real though simple elementary way, the theological mind of Christendom in all the following centuries. Thus, in the Middle Ages it was the basis of Peter Lombard's *Books of the Sentences*,<sup>2</sup> which (witness the descrip-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> The "sentences" were derived, like proof-texts, from the primitive Church teachers: who were named "fathers," while the mediæval teachers were only "masters" or "doctors."



tion of scholastic systematisers as the "sententiators") became an accepted norm of later mediæval theologising; while in our new Reformation epoch it is the basis of Calvin's *Institutio*, the typical masterpiece of modern evangelical system. Popular exposition of it is at this hour a favourite mode of pulpit instruction in the circle of Christian doctrine (cp. Barrow's *Sermons on the Creed*): elaborate expositions of it (e.g., Pearson *On the Creed*, Witsius *On the Apostolic Symbol*) are favourite Christian classic works in systematic theology. While it has place in the Romish Catechism of Trent, Luther prescribed it, as going along with *The Lord's Prayer* and *The Ten Commandments*, in the minimum of Christian instruction to be given to her children by the Church. A year or two ago, in a small provincial town at the Antipodes, a minister (not the present writer) who had advertised that he would give a prize to every child, of whatever denomination, found correctly reciting The Apostles' Creed, suffered sore depletion in purse from the multitudinousness of qualified young divines who came flocking to his windows in answer to the challenge.

That symbol, thus defining the unchanging faith of Christendom in its movement, as of a river (Rev. xxii. 1-3) through the ages, is monumental proof, not only of the unity of that faith of Christendom through all those ages, in articulately distinct expression, but also of *the fairly adequate ripeness of the general second century Christian mind for safe transmission of a heritage of apostolic doctrine and Scriptures from the first century*. The Greek word "symbol" which natively means a *sign or mark*, in the present Christian use came to mean, "the *watchword or distinctive mark* of the Christian body, consisting in their *confession of faith, a creed*" (Liddell and Scott *in verbo*). It thus was like the "For Christ's Crown and Covenant" on the banner of the Covenanters, showing what it is that they so earnestly contended for all together. "The apostolic symbol" is historically known to us as fairly representing, in relation to later ages, the Vincentian *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* ("what—has been believed—always, everywhere, by every one") of Christian faith. Tertullian and Irenæus bear witness that the same faith is what was held in the second century Church from the beginning. *This* is what her confessors witnessed for and her martyrs died for. And a second century Christendom so holding this faith, of supernatural revelation and redemption, is a highly qualified witness regarding the substantive history of its primeval origination and transmission, as well as a monumental presumptive proof of its divinity.

## APPENDIX TO SEC. 4 (CHAP. II., BOOK II.)

*Additional Illustrations.*

These may be serviceable in showing what, to a student of the Bible question in its bearing on the apologetic situation, is of primary importance, namely, the view that is taken of the matters in question by Christian scholars of acknowledged eminence who oppose the revolutionary theorising. It was the writer's first intention only to give in this Appendix a selection of passages from the Essays in *Moses and his Recent Critics*,<sup>1</sup> whose value as a *witness* representing the relative mind of the seriously Christian community is in some respects unique, while the standing of the writers guarantees their qualification for speaking to the various points as men worth listening to regarding the merits of the case. But it may not be undesirable superfluosness to supplement those "American Notes,"—in particular, prefacing them with some British Notes, to constitute a sort of view of the recent movement as seen through the eyes of conservative British scholarship. We will connect that prefatory view with representative names of individual scholars well esteemed.

DR. BINNIE.—This honoured name reminds us that already, within little more than a decade, the movement in Britain has attained to historical tradition.<sup>2</sup> At the time of the first notable raising of the Old Testament question in Britain (in connection with the article "Bible," *Encycl. Britt.*, A.D. 1876), Dr. Binnie was a professor in the Aberdeen Divinity Hall of the Free Church of Scotland. He deliberately refrained from dealing with the subject in connection with a colleague's publications and case (Professor W. R. Smith's). He dealt with it in the fountains, of exposition by the German masters of the criticism in question. And his pamphlet (1880), *The Proposed Reconstruction of Old Testament History*, is a masterly dissertation on the subject, of permanent value like that of Witsius,<sup>3</sup> whom he resembled in respect of erudition and of Christian character. While personally holding the Mosaic

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> There was a Christian "tradition" in the Thessalonian Church within a few months after she had been founded; and (Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20) within ten years of that the Asian Churches were in peril from a naturalistic tradition, of worldliness (see Acts xvii. 18) called "philosophy" or "science."

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 310.

authorship of the Pentateuch, he made the essential question in this controversy to be, as to *the authentically historical truth* of the Scriptures; and standing on this ground (four years after Graf's definitive pronunciamento),<sup>1</sup> he thoroughly grasped the situation as it is at the present hour. The Graf resuscitation was fairly under weigh when Dr. Binnie wrote; and his pamphlet if now republished would, in its manifest mastery of the subject as a whole and in details, itself be an exposure of the silliness if not shamefulness of speaking as if all the competent "scholarship" in the world were on the negative side of the question.

It is needless to quote from his luminous exposition what now—thanks to him and others—is fully in the air. But the following (cp. the statement of Dr. Moody Stuart)<sup>2</sup> has a weighty individuality of personal testimony, while placing us in the view-point of a Scottish Christian scholar at the beginning of this (as he thinks) imported movement in his country:—

"To the Christian Church the Pentateuch forms part of the Word of God, and possesses the qualities of infallible truth and divine authority. It purports to relate the unfolding of God's redemption purpose from the fall of Adam till the settlement of Israel in Canaan. This unfolding of the divine purpose took place 'in divers manners.' It took place partly by particular oracles, that is by express declarations of His mind and will made to our first parents, to the patriarchs, to Moses; partly by dispensations of His providence acting concurrently with more express declarations of His mind; partly also by laws and institutions delivered by His authority to be observed. The promise of a Seed in whom all the nations shall be blessed; the destruction of Sodom; and the institution of circumcision,—these are familiar examples of the 'divers manners' of divine revelation from the history of Abraham. The three are always seen in Scripture acting concurrently, and are to be viewed together. The great divines from Augustine to Jonathan Edwards laid particular stress on the historical character of divine revelation, and have ascribed to the *sacred history* delivered in and by the Scriptures authority co-ordinate with the doctrinal statements of particular truth.

"Regard to these considerations makes it impossible to look with an easy mind on theories which overthrow the historical truth of the Scripture. Take away the literal historical truth of the evangelical record, and the Christian doctrine of redemption and eternal life will not stand for half a century. If Christ be not risen, our faith is vain; we are yet in our sins. Take away the literal historical truth of the Old Testament

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 276, footnote.

history, and the great ideas about God and man, about sin and redemption, which sustained the life of the Old Testament Church, must fall to the ground. And if this is true of the Old Testament history in general, it is especially true of the middle books of the Pentateuch, which contain the authentic record of the delivery of the law by the ministry of Moses. This view of the matter has presented itself to all the more thoughtful students of Holy Scripture. Nor has it by any means been confined to those who hold by the high and strict doctrine of inspiration hitherto characteristic of the English-speaking Churches."

It is interesting to look back on the *feelings* with which the situation was contemplated by this faithful witness, now in cloudless light:—

"It must be granted that men do not escape all difficulties by abiding within the lines of the Christian faith regarding the truth of Holy Scripture,—the veracity of the writers and the verity of the record. No wise man will make light of the difficulties of faith, in the biblical any more than in the doctrinal domain. A raw student may start difficulties in the Old Testament history which the ripest divine may admit his inability to solve. But if you once get over the initial difficulty of the supernatural, the difficulties attaching to the old version of the sacred history, which accepts the Bible narratives as thoroughly trustworthy, are nothing in comparison with the difficulties attaching to the new version, which rejects the Bible narratives in their natural sense, and forces them into a sense never intended by their authors, and never imagined by unsophisticated minds" [*sophisticated* is the Greek for "cunningly devised" at 2 Pet. i. 16].

"As for the proposal to accept the critical reconstruction of the sacred history, and to retain along with it the faith of the Church regarding the truth and authority of the Holy Scriptures, it is the most inadmissible of all. Two guests so antagonistic were never yet able to dwell long together in one mind. They may lodge together for a while; but in the end, one must cast out the other. Besides, what would be gained were this incompatibility overcome? The Church's faith in the Old Testament has its difficulties; the critical revision of the sacred history has its difficulties. To accept both—if the thing were possible—would not bring relief from the difficulties clinging to either part, but would burden us rather with the difficulties pertaining to both."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following illustration is worth saving from the fate of occasional pamphlet utterance:—

"Nobody doubts that the First Book of Discipline was written by Knox and his friends at the beginning of our Reformation. Yet we might



Three years before publication of that pamphlet, the present writer published (*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, April 1877) a statement on the subject which then had begun to exercise all minds. Professor Binnie, with whom he was barely acquainted, in his quietly impressive manner volunteered an assurance, that he earnestly endorsed every word of that statement. This was comforting at the time—of much anxiety. It is now referred to for a present purpose.

Dr. Binnie apparently anticipated that the movement, which in Germany had well-nigh run its course if not spent its force, would not have much nor long success in the British continuation. The *Edinburgh Reviewer*<sup>1</sup> seems to see the beginning of the end of that effect. The following American utterance on the same general subject is from Professor Osgood:—

“The period of the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen criticism of the Old Testament, now drawing to its close, is marked by the same characteristics which distinguished its predecessors. From the days of Semler and Eichhorn, in the last century, each theory of destructive criticism has first been tentative, then speedily run into intense dogmatism, and, at the moment of apparent and asserted victory, it was smitten with paralysis and buried out of sight by its numerous children of newer theories that promised better results. Was there ever a man who lorded it boldly undertake to demonstrate that it was written during the public life of Dr. Chalmers, by the same line of argument which the critics follow in regard to Deuteronomy. There are qualities of thought and style observable in the writings of Knox, in respect of which they are in marked contrast to the writings of the following times down to the present century, when they reappear in Chalmers, Irving, and M'Crie. Besides, is it not plain to demonstration that the principle of compulsory education laid down in the First Book of Discipline belongs to the nineteenth century? [The principle remained inoperative and unheard of for three centuries.] . . . The reader may smile; but the argument is every whit as good as that of the critics in reference to Deuteronomy,—very much better than their arguments about the middle books. The truth is, that in the age of Hezekiah and Josiah, the Hebrew Church did remarkably revert to the principles, and institutions, and Holy Scriptures of its youth; just as the Scottish Church of fifty years ago began to remember, with new intelligence and warm love, the thoughts and principles, the men and institutions, of the Reformation.”

It was characteristic of Dr. Binnie's type of manly piety, that, with express reference to biblical scholars whose fame then filled the world, he openly avowed a strong revulsion from a certain manner of mere “scholarship” in handling Scripture (Matt. vii. 6), which tends to desecrate a holy thing, and essentially is a profane vulgarity.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 249.

over German scholarship with more imperious learning and decision, or was followed by a larger and more imperious clientele than Ewald? And yet, one of the inheritors of Ewald, Siegfried, declares that not one of Ewald's opinions has any following in Germany now. The learning of nineteen centuries of Christianity, the bones of deserted theories that mark the desert on either side of the path of faith in the God-given Word, the utter failure through all these centuries to offer any possible substitute for a God-given Word, render the existence of the destructive theories parietic [*paresis* = brain-softening?], swift hastening to decay. When the whole argument of the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen theory is summed up, it is found to demand the surrender of faith in Jesus Christ as anything more than a man imperfectly informed; of all reliance on the New Testament as the Word of God; of all trust in the sciences of Egyptology and Assyriology, with their myriad proofs against this theory; in other words, of believing anything *but what these critics tell us, and because they tell us.*"—*The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, April 1891.

PRINCIPAL CAVE<sup>1</sup> is known, wherever English is read by men taking an interest in these matters, as author of high-class works dealing with the Old Testament question in its true ultimate fountains of solution (*e.g.*, his work *On Sacrifice*). At present, for a glance into the English mind as now exercised about our matter, we will refer only to what may be called the Cave-Driver (and Cheyne) episode of 1890-91.<sup>2</sup>

Canon Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (1891) at once took high place in verbal or formal scholarship, as appearing, *e.g.*, in laborious collections and digests of particulars bearing on Old Testament Hebrew usage of speech. On this account the more there was call for close attention to his bearing or apparent leanings relatively to real questions of higher criticism: especially since he is esteemed the best sample of those critics who<sup>3</sup> hold a professed adherence to the scriptural supernaturalism of revelation and redemption in combination with revolutionary critical opinions relatively to the Scriptures. His own views of general questions thus arising are set forth in an elaborate Preface to the *Introduction*: with reference to which we here place notes that were suggested by the reading of that Preface:—

1. Dr. Driver makes criticism ("we") to stand in opposi-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps worth remembering here that he at one time was an adherent of the theorising he now opposes.

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 243-4.

tion to *traditional* views of Scripture. The right word there would rather be *negativism*. Criticism can be traditional. His own critical views are traditional, in a school that has existed for generations. If adherence to received Christian views regarding Scripture be a traditionalism in its nature opposed to "criticism," then "criticism" is in its nature opposed to the spiritual mind at 1 Cor. ii. 15 (where the Greek for "judge" is *criticise*), if not also to the sense or gumption at 1 Cor. x. 15 (where likewise the Greek for "judge" is *criticise*). If scholars like Principal Cave and Professors Green and Robertson be deemed natural enemies of "criticism," so much the worse for its devotees ("I banish *you*,"—Coriolanus).

2. Regarding certain distinctive positions of (negativist) "criticism," he speaks as conclusions *which it is impossible to dispute* on proper grounds of literary judgment. This unpleasantly reminds us of the infallibility of negativism. At the first notable outbreak of the present phase of it in Britain, Principal Cave had occasion to say, "Views which have scarcely been advocated by a score of respectable scholars were put forward absolutely as the commonly accepted and indisputable results of unbiassed research."<sup>1</sup> Formulæ of that sort have too much come in place of men's "bringing forward their strong reasons." Reliance on them is a *weak irrational* traditionalism, tyranny at one pole calculating on slavishness at the other. It is to be noted that Dr. Driver in large measure avowedly *does not give reasons* for the critical opinions he here propounds. *On what ground* are his readers to accept them? The ground of assuming that the Caves, Greens, Robertsons are nothing, and that the Grafs, Kuenens, Wellhausens—to whom he "says ditto"—are all-sufficient, while the reader's own judgment has no office but passively blind acceptance of this dictation?

3. The protestation, that those conclusions are in keeping with belief in *divine authority and inspiration* of Scripture, can be rationally accepted only as expressing an opinion of Dr. Driver. Others of the critics holding the conclusions are of an opposite opinion, namely, that they are subversive of belief in divinity of Scripture, and even subversive of belief in the supernatural revelation it professes to record. Dr. Driver in his opinion is not an infallible pope. And the community, to whom he proposes it for acceptance, is entitled to "ask a reason" (1 Pet. iii. 15), or some explanation as to the following points:—1. By "inspiration," does Dr. Driver mean—the thing really in question—divine authorship of the *Scripture* (2 Tim. iii. 16), and (2 Pet. i. 20) not *only* an effect on Scrip-

<sup>1</sup> *Brit. and For. Ev. Rev.*, October 1870, p. 597.

ture produced by the human author's mental condition (*afflatus*)?—2. If he really mean this, *divinity* of Scripture in its authorship, how comes he to make historical representations of Scripture to be in fact untrue? If an "inspired" book be false in its witness regarding "earthly things," can *talk* about "inspiration" make it a trustworthy witness regarding "heavenly things"?—3. Does he believe that Christ and His apostles, in proceeding on the received view regarding the Old Testament, laid a false view of Scripture at the foundation of religion?

Principal Cave's contributions at present in our view are, two articles in *The Contemporary Review*:—in April 1890, "The Old Testament and the Critics," with reference to preceding articles by Drs. Cheyne and Driver; and in December 1891, "Canon Driver on the Book of the Law." We preface our account of them with another extract from the above-cited article of ten years' earlier date (p. 605):—

"Here the present writer cannot refrain from making a personal statement. Assertion cannot, of course, go for much; but he is nevertheless desirous of distinctly saying that, while he believes he is familiar with the whole of the voluminous and arid literature of the controversy, from the suggestive essay of Astruc down to the last contribution of Delitzsch to the *Zeitschrift für kirchlichen Wissenschaft und kirchlichen Leben*, of Valeton to the *Studien*, and of Bloch to the *Jüdische Literaturblatt*, he has never seen reason, on purely literary, philological, or historical grounds, for more than very slightly qualifying (and that mostly with regard to the book of Genesis) the traditional view of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch."

Of the articles at present in view, the following is a digest (*in our words*):—

IN THE FIRST OF THE TWO ARTICLES, Principal Cave sets forth as the alleged grounds of cumulative argument on behalf of the [naturalistic] evolutionary theory.—1. *The laws* consist of three *strata*, so differing in style and contents as to evince diversity of authorship ("The position that all the laws of the Thora are from a single hand really does not merit refutation."—*Kuenen*). 2. They are imbedded in a *narrative* similarly shown to be threefold in authorship. 3. *Internal contradictions* between the strata of laws further imply that they belong to different ages of Israel's history. 4. The pentateuchal representation of the original circumstances is *unhistorical* ("The exodus, the wandering, the passage of the Jordan, and the settlement in Canaan, as described in the Pentateuch, simply could not have happened."—*Kuenen*).

What Principal Cave contends for is a "*Journal*" theory



of the origination of the Pentateuch: to the effect that, while the institutions originated in the exodus forty years, the pentateuchal account of their origination was written in that age. That there are three distinct strata of laws, he recognises as a fact; but he holds that their diversity of characters in the Pentateuch is accounted for by supposing that the legislation in Ex. xx.—xxiv. (also xxxiv.) took place at the beginning of the forty years, and the ceremonial legislation from Ex. xxv. down to the close of *Numbers* took place in course of those years, while the résumé and completion in *Deuteronomy* came at the close of the period. There is, he contends, no difference of style that could not have arisen, *e.g.*, from difference of subjects and occasion, or from the writing's being done at different periods in one author's life, or from its being done by various hands under one authoritative direction. The difference in contents he holds to be accounted for by the fact that, while,—1. what we have in Ex. xxi.—xxiii. is the elementary foundation constitution of Israel,—2. in the middle books after Ex. xxiv. we have legislation that came after that original founding, particularly the ceremonial system raised on its basis, and,—3. *Deuteronomy* is a re-exhibition of the rounded constitution thus existing, modified suitably to changes in Israel's position and outlook, when about to enter the promised land,—the continuous chronologically onward movement all through the pentateuchal representation implies unity of historical production. And the negative critics are challenged to *specify*,—1. the alleged *anachronisms* in the Pentateuch which necessitate an evolutionary view of its origin,—2. the *internal contradictions* which exclude the supposition of its originating all in one period,—3. the *representations* as to fact which are shown to be *unhistorical*,—4. the true explanation of the legislative formula, "The Lord said —," and,—5. the *reasons* against a "Journal" theory of origination. On behalf of such a theory or view he appeals, *e.g.*, to the manifest *historicity* of the whole, with corroboration from external testimonies;—to the substantial satisfactoriness of the view as accounting for later Israelitish history and literature,—to the relative testimony of Christ and belief of Christians,—to the relative implication of Christianity in substance.

In this article it appears<sup>1</sup> how fully real judgment, as to the merits of this Bible question, is within the competency of men who are not expert "scholars": the considerations on both sides, which are by scholars themselves regarded as decisive, can be appreciated by an unlearned man of sense, and cannot by a learned man without sense.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 260, etc.

IN THE SECOND ARTICLE, the writer necessarily goes to some extent over the ground of the first ; but he finds occasion to go somewhat into details of the more technical scholarship, in relation to which the commonalty are dependent on the judgment of experts : as to which, however, he makes the point, that merely *linguistic* considerations are now not much relied on by the negative criticism,<sup>1</sup> as compared with *historical* considerations, on which it is that the questions are felt to hinge.

The points of his challenge (he here maintains) have not been met: they are really unassailable. That is, on grounds of criticism, there is no valid objection to a "Journal" theory: consequently, no justification for a theory that rejects the received view regarding the Scriptures in question. Some of the *minutiae* of criticism are looked at, *e.g.*—*Genesis* differs from the four other books in this respect, that in literary execution they are homogeneously one, while *Genesis* is plainly composite in matter and in literary form—1. In respect of particular words, *e.g.* *Jehovah* ("the LORD") and *Elohim* ("God") as names of the Deity; and, 2. in respect of literary form and of looking at the subject-matters of the primeval history. So that it is a fair suggestion that the author of the book as it stands may have incorporated in it one or more documents of an earlier date; as is done, *e.g.*, by the author of the books of *Kings*. But the endeavours of criticism to make out even in *Genesis* what precisely belonged originally to one document and what to another, have resulted in endless disagreements of the critics among themselves, which are a proof that the endeavours are hopeless. And for sample of the untrustworthiness of variation in use of individual words or phrases in these books as medium of proving diversity of authorship, the Reviewer analyses one of Dr. Driver's lists of variations to the effect of finding that, while "in all Canon Driver gives *fifty-seven* instances," in *eleven* of these there is no real relevancy to the intended proof—of diversity of authorship; in *twenty* cases, the usage is not confined to the one writing in question—so as to make a difference between it and other writings; in *ten*, only one instance of use is given to establish usage; in *two*, only two instances; and the few remaining cases really prove nothing. The variations, he maintains, that are found in these books *might* exist quite well with only one writer (and, of course, still more if several writers were employed under one direction—which would leave untouched the real point, of *contemporaneousness* of the writing with a supposed Mosaic origination of the institutions).

<sup>1</sup> So that heretofore that criticism, greatly founding on such considerations, was fundamentally mistaken even with reference to linguistics !

On the *historical* ground, he meets Dr. Driver's contention, that the law of the covenant (= "Jehovist Code," Ex. xx.-xxiv.), and *not* the Levitical laws (= "Priest Code," Ex. xxv.—Num. xxxvi.) is the basis of *Deuteronomy* (= "Deuteronomic Code"), by contending that they *both* are at the basis of it,—“that the laws of the Levitical Code are substantially an expansion of the Law of the Covenant, that the Deuteronomic Code is an expansion both of the Law of the Covenant and of the Levitical Code, and that the Deuteronomic Code, as its novelties especially show, belongs to a date prior to the death of Moses”: these “novelties,” *e.g.*, adjusting the Sinaitic constitution to a new situation at the close of the wandering, being such as could naturally arise only at the point of time assigned to them by the received view as to *Deuteronomy*. Thus, as to the altar of sacrifices, the place for it hitherto is movable, because a *movable centre* of worship (the tabernacle) was in the condition for which then the law was given, namely, Israel's *wilderness* condition: on the other hand,<sup>1</sup> *Deuteronomy*, looking toward Israel's Canaan condition, ordains that there shall be only *one fixed centre*;—the regulative principle always continuing to be (Ex. xx. 24, etc.) “the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to put His name there.” So again, in *Deuteronomy*, exhibiting at one point a stringency beyond that of the Jehovist Code, at another point we see *relaxation* as compared with the Priest Code,—which also is accounted for by the difference of conditions between Sinaitic wandering and (anticipated) Canaan settlement. Thus, with reference to the blood of an animal slain for food; in Leviticus (xvii. 1-6), after the sacredness of blood had been marked (Lev. xvi.) in the atonement ordinance, it was prescribed that the blood should be presented “at the door of the tabernacle,” which was *accessible* to every one in the wilderness life; while *Deuteronomy*, on the other hand (xii. 10-16), looking forward to a condition in which that accessibility shall not exist, relieves the Israelite of obligation to bring the blood to the tabernacle,—only prescribing that he shall sacredly abstain from eating it.

Dr. Driver's contention, that the Levitical Code is shown by its difference from the Covenant laws to be of a far later age, is met by a detailed examination of the differences alleged; and those, where they really exist, are shown not to necessitate the supposition of a later date of origin. They are, the Reviewer maintains, sufficiently accounted for by the difference in purpose between a code of regulations for a ceremonialism, the administration of which was in the hands of priests and Levites,—so that the people generally had no charge of its right ordering,—

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 298.

and laws which were at the foundation of all the nation's common life, so that every Israelite had an individual responsibility in the matter of them through all his own life's length and breadth. Similarly are to be explained the differences between the Priest Code and the Deuteronomic allocation,—which is addressed to the Israelitish nation generally, and thus does not resume the distinctively priestly legislation, which comparatively was a private matter, though it has directions and allusions which presuppose the existence of that legislation. And the whole substantive position, in exhibiting the matter as prescribed by the received view in accordance with the known facts in the case, is defined by Principal Cave in the following formula (the *italics* are his):—

*“The Deuteronomic Code expands the Law of the Covenant; but the Deuteronomic Code expands also the Levitical Laws: further, if there are many parts of the Levitical Laws not referred to in Deuteronomy, these are parts which refer to the erection and cultus of the tabernacle, which were addressed to a class, whether of artificers or of ministrants, and were not of permanent special interest to the whole people: further, where the Deuteronomic Code differs from the Levitical, the differences are explicable on two principles,—either by the prospective change of circumstances from the nomad to the settled life, or by a relaxation of severity possible after some years' experience of the harder law: and further, where the Deuteronomic Code has laws which are without parallels, either in the Law of the Covenant or in the Levitical Code, these laws are wholly explicable by the change of circumstances, which it was the duty of the departing legislator to forecast and to provide for.”*

PROFESSOR ROBERTSON.<sup>1</sup>—The Glasgow Professor of Oriental Languages possesses the great advantage of having resided in the East, among Israel's kindred Shemites, so as to be at home in the distinctively Semitic manner of thinking, feeling, acting, speaking. This—to a non-cloisteral man who is a real student—gives a realistic insight that makes mere bookish Orientalism appear like Goldsmith's Chinese philosopher describing the strange English nation in *Letters from London*. Though Dr. Robertson's Baird Lectures (A.D. 1889) were not earlier than Principal Cave's articles, and simultaneous with the appearance of *Moses and his Recent Critics*, yet the lecturer is to be welcomed as distinctly a new-comer on the field: more especially as his treatment of the subject is—without ostentation—markedly fresh, exhibiting a forceful individuality of independent judgment regarding the whole matter.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 278.



His method is solidly good in conception, and carried out with a sustained vigour that is an intellectual tonic to the reader. He begins with what the destructive critics own as indisputably authentic, the existing books of *Amos* and *Hosea*, placing us on historic ground a century before the time of Josiah and the finding of the book of the law: beyond which, again, another century, there is historic ground in Ex. xxi.-xxiii. and xxxiv., assigned by them to the ninth century B.C. From these monuments he derives conclusions regarding what must have been the Israelitish condition, relative to literature, civilisation, religion, at that time, and *what this presupposes*. By a process of regressive induction, he thus carries the argument, on solidly historical grounds of reasoning, up to the conclusion, of which the whole Old Testament comes to be a monumental proof, namely, that there is no rationally supposable real *beginning* of Israelitish history short of *that* supernaturalism which is the real thing in question relatively to the Old Testament. And he so conducts the argument as to *educate* his reader into conscious possession of the ground, looking at the primeval past through the eyes of the Israel of the eighth and ninth centuries B.C., and scorning the suggestion of a later origin of the Deuteronomic and the Levitical pentateuchal constitution.

Dr. Robertson's argument, on the ground of incidental indications undeniably authentic, does not exclude what really is the primary and fundamental Old Testament external evidence in the case, namely, *the testimony of the Israelitish nation*, in its reception of the institutions, yea, and in its distinctive being and history as involving their existence. That national testimony, as one complex great whole, is a background of sustaining force to the detailed evidences incidentally appearing in the extant literature; as in the Macedonian phalanx charge the spearmen on the front line had sustaining force in the body of soldiery ranked closely behind them. And<sup>1</sup> perhaps Dr. Robertson, perceiving the tactical advantage of reasoning on ground of evidence whose existence cannot be denied by the destructive critics, is not always adequately appreciative of that one whole substantive phenomenon as a background of collective force. (Here still<sup>2</sup> we leave out of account the New Testament evidence,—the testimony of Christ and His apostles and that of the whole historical system of professed revelation completed in Christianity.) That *national* testimony, *e.g.*, of Israel's belief regarding the Scriptures and history in connection with them, may, in the judgment of sane historical reason, be far from being exhaust-

<sup>1</sup> See above, footnote, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. p. 305 above.

ively represented by what the destructive critics may happen at present to recognise as authentic. And, while it is well to deal with their opposition on its own ground, and show what resources for demolition of it are available on that ground,—it is well at the same time to reserve the right of what resources may exist outside of that ground for a reasonable establishment of truth.

With reference to *Mosaic authorship*,—a point really outside of his main central position,—Dr. Robertson holds that to bring *that* in as essential in opposition to the destructive criticism is a mischievous mistake in argumentative tactics; that, as against that criticism, the one thing to be maintained is the Mosaic (or primeval) origination of *the Israelitish constitution*, in its essence of supernatural revelation and redemption, by the one God living and true. He personally does not hold that the institutions existed in the Mosaic age in their pentateuchal maturity of development;<sup>1</sup> and he, correspondingly, of course, does not hold that the pentateuchal Scriptures as we have them are of Mosaic antiquity. The one point he maintains in relation to them is their *historical truth* in their account of the matter in question. And this he keeps iterating—we might say harping on it—in a manner suggestive of the impression, that—like Witsius—conservative critics as a class now make the Mosaic authorship essential in their position, to such effect that, if *this* be not maintained, the defence of the Old Testament is abandoned. Though that had been a fact as regards them, it might have been somewhat out of place on the lecturer's part to give such prominence to his opinion about what, relatively to the defence he maintains in common with them, really is a side-question,—which he does not discuss, and about which a different opinion is held by the generality of those who are at one with him in maintaining *the historical truth* of the Scriptures. And in assuming as a fact—of which he offers no proof—that they as a class make the Mosaic authorship to be to such effect in the central position of defence against the destructive criticism, he appears to speak without book.

His own position relatively to authorship of the Pentateuch is not clearly disclosed. With reference to those who deny the historical truth of the Scriptures while professing belief in their inspiration, he<sup>2</sup> remarks that it would be a good service if they

<sup>1</sup> "In view of the only statements which the biblical writers themselves make on the subject, there is nothing to preclude the supposition of various editions of the laws at different times, while yet the system as a whole, and even in the three separate codes, had a positive basis in the Mosaic legislation."—*Early Religion of Israel*, p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> See above, footnote, p. 247.

would explain what precisely *they mean* by inspiration. A professed believer in the historical truth of the Pentateuch, who denies its primeval authorship, would do a good service by explaining *how it could* originate in any post-Mosaic period without falsehood and imposture.<sup>1</sup> This, however, is an almost *ad hominem* criticism. Of more general interest and grave importance is the question of fact as to the recent position of conservative critics relatively to the Mosaic authorship.<sup>2</sup> And with reference to this question, the present writer contributes a widow's mite of illustrative information in the following "Reminiscences." The matter bears especially—in a manner that is of some real importance—on the existing situation as affected by the state of the Old Testament question at this present.

REMINISCENCES *regarding the occasion* of the first notable arising of the question in Britain. At that time Professor Robertson was, I suppose, in Syria,—along with the now Hebrew Professor Harper (of Melbourne),—much more pleasantly occupied with Semitic studies than were friends they had left behind them in Scotland. I believe that I had been (A.D. 1869) the first, in answer to a question addressed to me by Dr. Henderson, the then Convener of the Free Assembly's College Committee, to suggest that Mr. Robertson Smith, who had barely completed his college curriculum as a student, should be made Hebrew professor in place of Mr. Sachs (deceased). All through the history of his case (A.D. 1879–1881), I constantly took his part, on the view that his critical opinions—in the *Encycl. Britt.*, article "Bible," etc.—might be held, sincerely though mistakenly, by one believing, as he professed to believe, the Confessional (Westminster) doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. And my memory, thus and otherwise made vivid by personal connection with the history, is safeguarded by the very best possible documentary evidence dating from the time.

I have no thought of putting my knowledge of the history

<sup>1</sup> And the supposition that it conceivably could so originate in a later period does not imply that it did so in fact.

<sup>2</sup> "As to the argument that the veracity of the writer and the authenticity of his writing are of far greater consequence than mere authorship or date, he could believe that the Pentateuch may have been made public as a written document considerably later than its presumed date, were there evidence to that effect. If its historical evidence were abundantly attested, he had no greater interest in the question of date than that referring to biblical introduction."—Principal Brown, in the Aberdeen Free Presbytery, Feb. 14, 1878; at p. 13 of *Report*—see footnote below, p. 336. This was at the *beginning of the opening statement* in prosecution of libel against Professor W. Robertson Smith.

of Old Testament criticism in competition with that of such a gifted expert specialist as Dr. Robertson. But as a witness, I may say that my readings have left on my mind the general view, that now, as contrasted with the time of Witsius, conservative critics do *not*, as a class, make Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch essential in their defence of it against the destructive criticism, but only its authentic *historical truth*, and that now and again typical representatives of their view are found explaining to that effect.<sup>1</sup> And what I bring forward in these Reminiscences, of the way in which the new criticism was met by conservative believers on occasion of its first impressive emergence among them in the home country, appears conclusive as an illustrative sample.

1. *Assembly Proceedings*.—They have an interest for Bible students as an exhibition—the *only* historical exhibition?—of highest ecclesiastical dealing with a case referring to our Old Testament question. And they bring into clear view, with an all but dramatic vividness, the fact, that the *historical truth* of the Scriptures is the only thing in the question as it then arose that was deemed essential by the immediately interested Christian community,—the Free Church:—essential, that is, in the sense of directly affecting the Church's faith regarding Holy Scripture.<sup>2</sup> In course of the proceedings, or in connection

<sup>1</sup> They nevertheless may deem the Mosaic authorship highly important. A position may be of great value in the strategy of a campaign which, in the tactic of a battle, only occasions difficulty of embarrassment. In that case the clever tactician, who abandons the position, may prove to have been a ruinously blundering campaigner.

<sup>2</sup> The following extracts (cp. footnote 2, above, p. 335) are from a Report of the Aberdeen Presbytery proceedings in the case, February 14 to March 14, 1878 (published by a number of elders as a reprint. Principal Brown's opening statement evidently is printed from his MS. as read in the Court).

Professor BINNIE—" . . . Let them take the theory that the earlier Israelitish history was tainted with fable, and that they did not get upon solid historical ground till they advanced to the book of Judges. Well now, he was not prepared to adduce any passage of the Confession of Faith that formally contradicted that. But suppose any person held that view, was there to be no strict judicial dealing in that case—(hear, hear). To take another case—that of the views of Riehm on the book of Deuteronomy. He held that it was post-Mosaic. Then along with that he held, what Professor Smith does not hold but strongly repudiated, that it was a fraudulent production. Suppose that that view were to arise among them, was there any formal contradiction there?"

Professor SMITH—"Certainly" (p. 112).

Principal BROWN—" . . . The point I wish you to note here is not the date assigned to this book [Deuteronomy], but the naked admission that the book is not history. And if not, pray what is it? Dr. Kuenen



with them, it was often asserted, or assumed, that the prosecutors made the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch an article of faith. But this was constantly disclaimed by them: *e.g.*, in particular by the Rev. Sir Henry W. Moncreiff, Principal Clerk of Assembly, who, when the case came to the point of ripeness for final decision (Assembly 1878), took the lead in the Assembly's deliberation adversely to Professor Smith. Both in Assembly speeches and afterwards in separate publications, he strongly deprecated as a palpable injustice the representation, that the denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was made a ground of condemning Professor Smith; and iterated and reiterated the statement, that the one thing in the indictment as finally matured was, denial of *the genuinely historical character* of Deuteronomy, contravening the Confessional doctrine of inspiration.<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry's great weight of character,

calls it 'a pious fraud,'—a fraud, because he holds it was given forth as genuine Mosaic history; but a pious fraud, because done for a pious purpose. Professor Smith says, No, not a fraud, because the generation to whom it was communicated knew what it was, and because its object was not to impose as history what was not such, but 'to expound and develop Mosaic principles in relation to new needs'" (p. 14).

These extracts show what, *from the beginning* of the proceedings in the lower Courts in connection with this case, was avowedly regarded as the essential matter in question by most resolute believers in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch,—namely, not its Mosaic authorship, but its historical truth. And see below the terms of the libel, which on this point remained unchanged from that day.

<sup>1</sup> In the existing circumstances, where a "heresy case" was a thing all but unprecedented in the Church's experience (there had only been one since 1843), and the subject was new and intricate, men might easily get confused, especially at the outset. Yet the procedure is very well fitted *ex fumo dare lucem*. At the beginning of the process (in Presbytery), all the charges against the professor were, after private conference with him, formulated in a libel, with which he was served in accordance with his own request (or demand) to Assembly 1877. In the course of procedure all the charges but one were finally worked off, as in a grand-jury process of finding "No true bill":—*e.g.*, a charge of denying that the Aaronic priesthood was instituted in the wilderness was withdrawn, on the ground that there was not *primâ facie* proof of the professor's denying that. With reference to Deuteronomy, he did not admit that he had denied the historical truth of the book; holding, as he did, that its representation is not historical, but dramatic.

I for one was of opinion that a man might hold this view of the character of the book while sincerely believing in its divine inspiration (I speak of myself, because not entitled in this connection to implicate others). The prosecutors held that, though it should be so, he yet was to be regarded as contravening the Confessional doctrine of the divine

his deserved repute of judicial fairness and perfect honesty, had all to be thrown into correction of the misrepresentation, which, though perhaps natural in the circumstances, must have sorely tried his large goodness of nature. But the fact of mistake is transparently clear on the face of the indictment: so that it is no wonder he complained of people's listening to speeches and gossip instead of looking at the words of the libel. Its one remaining charge ("amended libel") at the Assembly of 1880 stood as it had been from the outset in the Aberdeen Presbytery:—

"Albeit the opinion that the book of inspired Scripture called Deuteronomy, which is professedly an historical record, does not possess that character, but was made to assume it by a writer of a much later age, who therein, in the name of God, presented, in dramatic form, instructions and laws as proceeding from the mouth of Moses, though these never were, and never could have been, uttered by him . . . contradicts or is opposed to the doctrine of the immediate inspiration, infallible truth, and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, etc."—Assembly Papers, No. ii., "Case of Rev. Professor Smith, Aberdeen."<sup>1</sup>

authorship of Scripture, because, *in the Church's estimation*, the book of Deuteronomy is *in fact* historical. On the fine point of Church law thus raised, the Assembly of 1878 was, it seemed, almost equally divided. But regarding the real *meaning* of the motion that was carried, there afterwards was doubt: of two most estimable voters for it whom I questioned, one (the late Mr. David Dickson) said that *his* meaning was, that Professor Smith's teaching about the Bible contradicted the Confessional doctrine of inspiration, while the other (the late Rev. Mr. Falconer of Ferry-Port-on-Craig) said that, rather than vote for the motion on that understanding of its meaning, he "would have cut off his right hand" (his expression).

It will be understood that—at this distance of time and place, when almost all I have named are in their graves—I do not mean to reflect unfavourably on any of the persons engaged in that case. No one imagined that Professor Smith would make any fight for his position in the Church if he did not himself regard it as accordant with his ordination vow of loyalty to her doctrinal constitution. He was much esteemed in her communion for his personal character of honourable truthfulness, as well as admired on account of his ability and attainments. *Our present point* is only regarding the *theological* position of those who personally believed in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

<sup>1</sup> The Assembly by a majority declined to deal with the professor as guilty under the libel, and—in a clause added to the motion as first framed (by the present writer)—censured him on account of offensiveness in his *manner* of dealing with Holy Scripture. In the following year, after new publication by him in what was deemed the same manner more pronouncedly, Professor Smith was, not deposed as a heretic, but informed

2. *The Article in the Brit. and For. Ev. Rev.*, referred to at p. 325 above as having been completely approved by Professor Binnie;—three years before publication of his pamphlet (with which cp. his lecture to the *Glasgow Young Men's Christian Association* on "Recent Attempts to eliminate Supernatural Revelation from Holy Scripture"). Dr. Binnie strongly maintained the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. At the same time he made the historical truth of the Scriptures, not the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, to be the essential matter in controversy with the destructive criticism. Otherwise, he could not have given that unqualified approval to the article now referred to. And that in this respect he was not isolated will appear from the following notes and extracts, through which the article attains to a factitious importance, irrespective of intrinsic weight,<sup>1</sup> as a feather has value in showing how the wind blows.

It was not the manifesto of a leader, but only the substance of a paper that had been read to a Free Church Clerical Association in Edinburgh, 15th Jan. 1877, that is, previous to publication of the College Committee's *Report* on Professor Smith's article "Bible" in the *Encycl. Britt.*, before that matter was ripe for judicial consideration of the Church in her Courts. My article studiously avoided reference to any *specialty* of that case; and it distinguished between two general questions in connection with the subject:—1. Did Moses write the Pentateuch? 2. Supposing that he did, and that this is the general opinion in the Church, ought the opinion to be a term of office, and in this way, an article of her doctrinal constitution? The distinction is illustrated by what the writer now remembers to have heard at the time, about a strong Clerical Association in another city, whose members were—at that point of time—all in favour of tolerating in the Church's teaching office the new critical opinions, while not one of them personally accepted those opinions.

The writer placed himself as not an expert specialist in Old Testament scholarship. He personally believed in Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, with qualifications ordinarily made by defenders of that belief. His view of *ecclesiastical*

by resolution of Assembly, that he had not the confidence of the Church, and that, consequently, the Assembly could not and would not go on supporting him in the Church's professorial office for education of her future ministers.

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, placed by Professor Bissell of Hartford (U.S.), *The Pentateuch*, in his catalogue of works on the subject. Perhaps this with him was a case of "far come birds hae fine feathers." Certainly this Eden Lane bird had no thought of so being blown round the world.

*policy* relatively to the new opinion as to that was, that it ought not to be dealt with as matter of Church discipline, but allowed free course of scholarly expiscation. This view as to policy did not commend itself to all present. But as regards his manner of placing the received view of authorship of the Pentateuch, he does not remember that there was any dissent on the part of adherents of that view; and after publication of the paper there were expressions of earnest satisfaction with its representation, particularly (he now remembers) on the part of laymen (*e.g.*, the aforesaid Mr. David Dickson) conspicuous by Christian intelligence and solid strength of judgment. The extracts call for no further introduction beyond intimation of the full title of the paper,—“The Age of the Pentateuch, with special reference to Revelation and Inspiration.”

1. “Up to this time the question of the age of the Pentateuch has, by people of sense, been very much left to experts in relative linguistics and antiquities. No Church in the world has ever really dogmatised to the effect that Moses was the writer of our existing Pentateuch. Probably no Church in the world is at this hour qualified, or thinks herself qualified, to dogmatise on the subject. The relative dogma of the Churches has only implied that the Pentateuch, as part of Holy Scripture, is a divine record of a divine revelation. The traditional impression or opinion that Moses wrote the Pentateuch has never yet assumed the place of a dogma in any Church.”—*The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, April 1877, pp. 254, 255.

2. “It is not very long since denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch meant overt or covert rationalism or infidelity; so that the relative literature of the Church was part of her apologetic, of her defence of Christian religion against its assailants. . . . But now there are professing Christians of unquestionable intelligence and sincerity, who, while fully admitting the divine authority and inspiration of Scripture as a whole, and of the Pentateuch as part of Scripture, yet maintain that Moses was not the author of our existing Pentateuch. . . . We are bound to regard as constituting a providential call to reconsideration the circumstance, that not only this or that eccentric individual, but a respectable though perhaps small proportion of otherwise trusted members or ministers of the Church, are found saying or thinking, ‘I hold that, while the Pentateuch is a divine record of a divine revelation, yet Moses was not the author of the record, nor the human originator of all the institutions described in the Pentateuch.’ In relation to such men I desire to speak on a footing of brotherly equality, as of Christian men who have an equal



right to hold their respective opinions, and are under an equal obligation to respect each other's rights" (pp. 257, 258).

"That is, it would be easy to do wrong in this case, as it is easy to do wrong in most cases. But to do wrong is not to be in the way of serving the cause of right. If we will be in that good way then we shall proceed upon the fact, that there is such a party as I have described among professing Christians of unquestionable sincerity and intelligence at this hour; so that the Church is now providentially called to reconsider, or to consider for the first time from a new point of view, her traditional opinion or impression regarding the question in hand" (p. 258).

3. "To allow and encourage discussion on this footing would, in my estimation, be to be in the way of doing good service to the Christian cause. Personally, I have a deep feeling that to bring crude ecclesiastical *force* in on my side of the question would be a deadly injury to that side. On the other hand, a really generous discussion with brethren of another way of thinking would in various ways tell in favour of that side.

"For instance, in such a discussion the bearing of revelation and inspiration, as confessed facts, on this question would obtain a place of due prominence and influence which has hitherto been a manifest *desideratum*. In a discussion of this sort among brethren holding those great facts in common, one could hopefully say much that would be out of place in a debate with infidels or with rationalists. Thus, the fact that Christ's word is divine as well as human is to such men weighty in relation to the apparently remote question now before us; for to many of them it will appear in the last degree unlikely that God in Christ should have so spoken as *in effect* to mislead men about human authorship of the Pentateuch. Again, to such men the confessed fact that God is the primary author of the Pentateuch is important in relation to the question of secondary (human) authorship; for many of them will regard as incredible the suggestion that God should have moved any one but Moses to write a book so ostensibly Mosaic as Deuteronomy. The supposition that the pentateuchal institutions are in large measure post-Mosaic will in like manner appear quite incredible.

"It may do good to Christian people to learn, as they must learn from such discussion as I have suggested, that the question about Mosaic origin of the pentateuchal institutions is fundamentally a question, not of abstruse scholarship, but of morality. It has been said that the personation of Moses, such as must be supposed if Moses was not the author of Deuter-

onomy, would not deceive the people of God in an age much later than the Mosaic. It certainly would not deceive them. But it does not follow from this that they would accept a Scripture or institution from a personator of Moses, their great prophet. What is most likely is, that they would stone the personator as profane ; so that Israel's acceptance of the book and the institutions falls to be regarded as a demonstration of the Mosaic authorship of both. But beyond that, there is the far more impressive consideration, that it is inconceivable that *God* should have inspired or authorised any man to put on *the false face* of the supposed impersonation, if not for the purpose, to the effect, of leading many following generations to believe what is not true,—that Moses said and did what he really did not say nor do.

"In a discussion among brethren holding by revelation and inspiration, such considerations would be alleged with confessed relevancy, though there should be some demur about their conclusiveness. I think that the concession of their relevancy to the question in hand, a concession that could not be refused by the brethren who accept our Christian doctrine of revelation and inspiration, would be a very great advantage to our side of the present question" (pp. 270-272).

4. "I have an impression that the brethren who, agreeing with us about revelation and inspiration, yet differ from us about the present question, may be unconsciously determined by a theory of 'evolutionism' which natively is anti-supra-naturalistic and infidel. . . . That 'evolutionism' dislikes prediction proper, and leans toward reducing supernatural revelation to a *minimum*, the nearer to *nothing* the better. It founds upon the alleged fact, that supernatural communication to man, except in a measure infinitesimally small, would involve a violence to man's nature as rational. The *minimum* when analysed will often be found to be little more than a sort of protoplasmic matter of divine communication, not at first existing in any definite shape, but taking shape more and more precise as it passes down the series of prepared prophetic minds. . . . As a theory it is lame and impotent, were it only because . . . it does not enable us to *see* the thing which a 'theory' is bound to show us. The alleged difficulty, occasioned by the impossibility of making a divine communication to man without violence to his nature as rational, is not solved by reducing the communication to a *minimum*, but is left unsolved in that primeval *minimum* of supernatural revelation.

"In the interest of that *minimum* the theorists naturally revolt from the supposition, that all at once there should have been given to Moses so large an amount of new revelation as

must have been given to him if the pentateuchal books and institutions be Mosaic in authorship. Here they resemble the physical evolutionists in objecting to 'catastrophe,'<sup>1</sup> and contending for uniformitarianism, or progression invariably by insensible degrees, one shading into another. And in that interest which has led them to contend for their *minimum*, they are really bound to contend that even the protoplasmic matter of revelation corresponds to the Hegelian pregnant principle of 'being equal to nothing.' For if in that protoplasmic matter of revelation there be *any real thing*, anything supernaturally communicated to man's mind by God, then it is manifest stupidity to object to any conceivable amount of such communication, it does violence to the rational nature of man.

"I believe that the principle to which some of our brethren are unconsciously yielding obedience is one which thus can result in only an empty idealism. I therefore wish that the Church should encourage such friendly discussion as may lead those brethren to feel the pulse of ordinary members of the Church. That will lead them to recognise theoretically what they know in their own hearts' experience, that the Bible does not record a series of illusive representations of ideas; that what it records is a historical proceeding of the living God to the redemption of mankind" (pp. 272-274).

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## NOTES.

### NOTE A.

Professor Dwinell, in his Essay on "The Higher Criticism and a Spent Bible," in *Moses and his Recent Critics* (p. 287), says:—

"The mind is put to questioning whether this or that is genuine, in its right place, and is historical. The writings are treated as the work of historical jugglers, now throwing late events back into the mould of the past to make them seem ancient history, and now setting forth actual occurrences so as to make them appear in the womb of futurity and make them pass for prophecy. The wits of the reader must be sharp to catch the truth under these various metamorphoses."

This is said with reference to "the *Secondary* Higher Criticism" (=our "half-way" view), which (Essay, p. 282)

<sup>1</sup> But see *per contra*, above, p. 294, etc.

"aims to preserve the supernatural element and the substantial integrity of the historical facts while it rearranges them." Regarding it the trenchant Californian professor says further (p. 283):—

"It plays fast and loose with destructive criticism, and it plays fast and loose with conservative criticism. It shows respect for the sacred narrative, and disrespect for it [=sometimes it murders, and sometimes not]. It honours the Bible, and dishonours it. It culls scriptural facts, reassorts them, and throws them around in new and strange combinations. At one time it adopts the method of the Primary Higher Criticism [anti-supernaturalistic, Essay, p. 280], at another time it flinches from its conclusions. Its position at every point is that of weakness."

Regarding "the Primary Higher Criticism," he says (pp. 280–282):—

"The extraordinary elements [in Old Testament history], all the supernatural and miraculous elements, are regarded as later imaginings thrown back on the early facts. It is taken for granted that the first thing to be done by the higher critic is to go through the religious literature and reduce to a natural level all those mythological additions and fables. The next thing, as the sacred narrative has evidently been arranged to set forth this supernaturalism, is to pull apart the historical setting in which it is presented, decide what is fact and what is fabrication; and the last thing, having thrown away the fabricated portions, is to rearrange what is left in the proper historical order of a natural development of the religious life. . . . We cannot expect Wellhausen or Kuenen or Stade to absorb the Hebrew history, digest it, and then resecret it with God active in it, or with any special inspiration, or real revelation or supernatural interposition of any sort, any more than we could expect a yew tree to throw its roots around the grave of Shakespeare or Milton, and then secrete from its branches a 'Hamlet' or a 'Paradise Lost.'"

#### NOTE B.

The following is from Professor Chambers's "Introductory Historical Sketch of Pentateuchal Criticism" in *Moses and his Recent Critics*, p. 22:—

"Some eminent British scholars, such as the brilliant W. Robertson Smith, and the learned Drs. T. K. Cheyne and S. R. Driver, have given assent to these positions. The same may be said of the accomplished Professor C. H. Toy of Harvard, with whom it is said some of the younger scholars of our own



country are in sympathy. Nor is it to be denied that some of the advocates of these views consider them entirely consistent with the inspiration and canonical authority of the books of the Hexateuch [= Pentateuch *plus* Joshua]; for, they say, no matter when or by whom these were set forth, they in every case retain the sanction given them in the New Testament, and are an authentic and sufficient guide to the belief of any into whose hands they may come. This may be true so far as concerns those who now maintain it, but certainly it will not hold generally. If it be openly proclaimed that we have no original data of early date, and that what profess or at least appear to be such are only the residuum of varying traditions which have been recast and edited at various times and by various hands, until in the course of centuries they have reached their present form, men will certainly arrogate to themselves the right to sit in judgment on this residuum, and analyse its contents and form their own conclusion as to its claims upon them. And if their confidence be shaken as to the historic worth of the first portion of the Old Testament, it cannot remain very strong in the rest. And, still further, if they feel that the New Testament presupposes and vouches for the early portions of the Old, as a true and trustworthy narrative, the conviction of a serious error here cannot but work disastrously for the entire volume of Scripture" (see further statement of Dr. Chambers, NOTE I below).

## NOTE C.

"I own it does appear as if there had now spread among many of the teachers of religion an apprehension of fully unfolding and strongly enforcing on their hearers of to-day the doctrine of sin, and of its moral and judicial consequences, such as it is taught in the Jewish and in the Christian Scriptures. But this, I have no doubt, is due in part to an enemy far more powerful than what is called the higher criticism, namely, *the world in its increasing power over our minds and lives*" (W. E. Gladstone, *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, new ed. The *italics* in the quotation are ours).

Regarding frivolity in criticism, Mr. Gladstone has said in the context:—

"It really too often seems as if, when we are arguing about the authenticity of Genesis or Exodus, we had no weightier task in hand than if we were discussing the Epistles of Phalaris, or the letters of Ganganelli, or the authorship of Junius."

## NOTE D.

Professor Green of Princeton (on "Genuineness of Isaiah xl.-lxvi." in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, April 1892) speaks as follows:—

"We have no argument at present with those who deny the possibility or the reality of supernatural foresight; with whom it is an axiom that there is no minute fulfilment of predictive prophecy; who find nothing in the utterances of the prophets but inferences from known facts, or vague presentiments based on religious ideas; and refuse to admit any distinct and unambiguous prescience of events lying beyond what is called the prophetic horizon. With all such the question is determined in advance, and there is no room for argument. Whatever arguments they may adduce are merely to sustain a conclusion already reached, and which rests in their mind on an *à priori* ground. This prophecy makes undoubted mention of the exile, and of Cyrus, and of the release of the captive Jews. And if this excludes the possibility of Isaiah being the author, and makes it certain that the prophecy could not have been written until the exile had taken place and Cyrus had appeared, and the hope had arisen in the mind of the captive Jews that this portended their release, the case is beyond argument. But if the existence of supernatural prediction of remote events in the future is an open question to be settled by the facts and the evidence, and not to be negatived by mere dogmatic presuppositions, then we think it can be shown to the satisfaction of every candid mind that there is no good reason to abandon the old and well-established belief that Isaiah is the author of these chapters."

But Dr. Green assumes that candid minds may reject this belief about the chapters while holding by supernaturalism of predictive prophecy.

Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Rochester and Bristol, in articles (now published separately) in *The Expository Times*, vol. iii., on "The Teaching of our Lord as to the Authority of the Old Testament," speaks thus:—

"There is, however, one characteristic of this modern view of the Old Testament, as set forth by those writers to whom I have referred [Graf, Kuenen, Wellhausen], which must always steadily be borne in mind. And it is this,—not merely that this modern view tends to, or prepares the way for, a denial of the supernatural, but that it owed its very origin to the assumption that the existence of the supernatural in these early records is exactly that which wrecks their credibility. . . . The basis of the histories and criticisms of the most eminent foreign

exponents of the so-called higher criticism is patently and even avowedly naturalistic. . . . We thus do not deem it unfair to say that the whole system of Old Testament criticism, as set forth by some at least of these foreign expositors, is based upon rejection of special revelation, miracles, and prophecy,—in a word, the supernatural in all its relations to the history of the chosen people” (pp. 153–159).

“The obliteration, or, at the very least, the minimising of the supernatural is too plainly the principle, avowed or unavowed, that influences or conditions the whole of the more advanced analytical investigation of the Old Testament” (p. 162).

“Inability to accept the supernatural is the distinctive feature of the analytical system” (p. 163).

#### NOTE E.

As to the tendency<sup>1</sup> of the theorising to refine away the primeval history.—Effectively, Moses and his work become what suits the theoriser, which may be little or nothing,—beyond perhaps a seed of inaugural delusion or imposture. In a more general aspect, this point is made by Mr. Gladstone in the passage above quoted from (NOTE C), as follows:—

“That which perplexes and may even alarm a sober-minded reader is that we have suffered controversy on the form almost to hide the substance from our view, certainly to lower and enfeeble the living sense, which the body of believers have always entertained of its authority, its majesty, its stringency, aye of the terrors of the law for those who will not accept its blessings.” [Here follows the sentence, “It really seems,” etc.] “And yet there they stand, these great facts and doctrines, in all the primitive severity of their outline, unshaken and august. There we find, now as heretofore, the doctrines of creation, of life, of human life, of the introduction of sin into the world, of the havoc which it wrought, of the simultaneous promise of redemption, of the selection of a special race for special purposes, and of the gradual preparation of the nations until the fulness of time had come. I have said nothing of that exhibition of preternatural power, which is supplied by prophecy and by wonder. These I forbear to dwell on, not so much because they cannot add to the marvel of creation, as because they seem to make a postulate or presupposition of religious faith, while facts of the class of those above recited . . . rest upon grounds of known fact, or of evidence cognisable by all.” [Here follows the sentence about present-day teaching that fails to duly inculcate the doctrine of sin,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 282.

and about growing *worldliness* at the root; cp. Heb. xii. 15, 16.]

To similar effect speaks the Bishop of Rochester and Bristol in the statement above cited (NOTE D):—

“Now, however, in the closing years of this century, we are told that this [the received] view must, to a great extent, be given up. We are, in fact, called upon to set aside the greater part of the beliefs of the past, and to see in the Old Testament a collection of ancient documents, many of highly composite structure, which came consecutively into existence centuries later than when they are supposed to have been written; and which, after various re-editings and redactions, only received the form in which we now possess them in the later, if not the latest, period of the exile” (*Expository Times*, iii. 257).

#### NOTE F.

The following extract is from Professor Osgood in *Moses and his Recent Critics*. His title is, “A Reasonable Hypothesis of the Origin of the Pentateuch,”—which, he says, “must be one which clearly agrees with all known facts”: adding, “any hypothesis that contradicts or does not agree with plain facts within its sphere is untenable.”

“Professor Maspero some years ago wrote: ‘In less than thirty years a new world of languages and peoples has been opened for study; thirty centuries have come forth from their tombs and reappeared in the full light of day.’ The literature, which these studies have evoked, represents more scholars than those who wrote on the pentateuchal controversy. They are the peers in every respect of the German and Dutch and English leaders of the school of criticism which denies that the Pentateuch is history. These historians of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, have the advantage over the critics of a single theme, that they base their results not on one book, but on hundreds of monuments of stone, clay, inscribed statues, engraved seals, containing the same texts with the variations of copyists. These historians breathe a larger, freer air than most critics, for they are compelled to take into account comparative ethnology, geography, and religion; to become familiar with the language, art, government, and social life and commerce of the peoples whose history they study” (pp. 379, 380).

By evidence of the archaeologists,—French, English, German,—he proves, point for point, that the historical assumptions underlying the critical theorising in question are contrary to historical fact. Thus, as to the assumption that at the time of



the Exodus "Egypt and Syria were at a relatively low state of civilisation,"—

*In point of fact*, "The Semitic inhabitants of the Tigris and the Euphrates meet us at their very first appearance in history as a settled people, possessed of a very high civilisation" (*Hommer*, with other witnesses); and "Egypt, as she first appears to us in her first creations, already possesses an art so advanced, that it seems the end rather than the beginning of a long development" (*Perrot and Chipiez*). "At that time [about 3000 B.C.], long before our usual ideas of the development of nations, there is formed a people highly instructed in all the arts of peace: a state completely organised; a hierarchy firmly founded, minutely divided and organised even in the smallest external matters; a universally diffused system of writing and the common use of papyrus; in short, a civilisation which, in all essential points, had already attained its full maturity; and only by sharp investigation can the further development in some directions be discovered" (*Brugsch*). "Syria [says Prof. Osgood, p. 329—generalising from testimonies he has given] before B.C. 1300 [assumed as date of the Exodus] had reached the same stage of civilisation as Egypt, and in manufactures and commerce had exceeded Egypt. It was densely populated, rich, and the emporium of the world's commerce. Its Semitic language appeared to the educated scribe of Egypt so refined, that he adorned his pages with its expressions, and taught that language to his children, that they might profit by it at home and abroad." The reference is to the period "at and before the Exodus." (N.B. that "Syria" here is especially *Canaan* = "the low land.")

Again, as to the assumption that the Israel of the Exodus had to *grow* into an "ethical monotheism," out of, virtually, a polytheism which was inevitable at that stage of the people's career,—

*In point of fact*,—while Brugsch and "other scientific archaeologists and historians" find an Egyptian monotheism "during ages anterior to B.C. 2000, or the time of Abraham,"—"when we turn to the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties [where the Exodus is placed]: *all Egyptologists* are in accord that monotheism was believed and was even established as the religion of the state for a short period during the eighteenth dynasty" (so *Le Page Renouf* and other witnesses). "These opponents [says Prof. Osgood, pp. 380, 381] postulate as 'the universal, or at least the common rule, that religion begins with fetichism, then develops into polytheism,' etc. . . . a pure traditional assumption and nothing more, when fully one-half of the scientific archaeologists believe that they can prove the contrary."

"So long as the hosts of Egyptian and Chaldean monuments corroborate the pentateuchal statement of customs, so long as the very ground of Chaldea, Syria, and Egypt proves the exactness of the Pentateuch minute geography, the date of the Pentateuch cannot be moved by any sound historical reason. . . . These minutiae . . . are facts that never yet have been successfully forged, because it is simply beyond the power of man to impose them upon men" (p. 407).

"The opponents of the Pentateuch as history claim a keener insight than other persons concerning questions of 3000 years ago; but they fail to see, or if they see, they fail to consider that '3000 years ago' when brought into plain sight before them and all men now. Except a few notices in Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, and Wellhausen's characteristic 'God-forsaken dreariness of certain modern Egyptologists,' one searches in vain in their writings for any real appreciation of the utter revolution that has taken place in ancient history by reason of the startling resurrection of long-buried nations" (p. 380).

#### NOTE G.

"The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament" is the title of a valuable article by Principal Caven of Toronto in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for July 1892: see extract below, NOTE K. The following extracts are from essayists in *Moses and his Recent Critics*:—

"Our Lord taught that He had come 'to fulfil the law and the prophets,' and on the road to Emmaus He expounded 'all things in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Himself.' St. Peter at Pentecost, St. James at the Council of Jerusalem, St. Paul before Agrippa, all take the ground that Christianity was the foreseen and designed accomplishment of the ancient Scriptures. Throughout the New Testament, in every form of utterance, teaching, narrative, exhortation, argument, it is constantly reiterated by the Lord Himself, and by all those whom He commissioned, that the Gospel was the intended fulfilment and culmination of the Law. Whether this ground was well taken or not, the whole position of the New Testament in this respect is indisputable" (Prof. Gardiner, "The Hebrew Religion not a Natural Development," p. 59).

"His view [Christ's], therefore, of the Mosaic law can be accounted for in neither of these ways [either mistake or 'accommodation']. The record of that view is in His almost every utterance. It appears in His devout submission to its

requirements as of divine authority; in His reference to its teachings as heavenly truth; in His citation of its statutes as embodying the duty of man, and of its representations of the God of Israel as absolute truth. Even when He enlarges or modifies its precepts, He still shows that His teaching was the original intention of the law, temporarily changed 'for the hardness of men's hearts.' He stood firmly and fully upon the Old Testament in all His promulgation of the New. He ever recognised its authority as absolute and of God, while He admitted no other authority. To Him 'the law, the prophets, and the psalms' were sacred books, divinely given. Is it likely that there was a radical error on this fundamental point in Him who spoke as 'never man spake'?" (p. 64).

"In this the New Testament speakers and writers were either right or wrong. If they were wrong,—setting aside all question of inspiration,—we have the astounding phenomenon that the best men of their race, in their spiritual apprehension, carefully trained in, and earnestly attached to the religion of their fathers, should have so utterly misunderstood its whole nature and purpose" (pp. 59, 60).

"Validity and Bearing of the Testimony of Christ and His Apostles" is the title of Professor Hemphill's Essay. His contention, that *the Mosaic authorship of the Scriptures* [pentateuchal] is avouched by Christ, occupies only a secondary or side place in his argument. His main central contention has reference to simply the *historical truth* of the Pentateuch, and the *divinity* of its institutions and Scriptures in respect of origin.<sup>1</sup> But in his view that historical truth and divinity cannot be maintained consistently short of holding that *the whole Israelitish constitution* exhibited in the Pentateuch is of Mosaic antiquity and origin. Thus, *e.g.*, as to *Deuteronomy*, that, apart from the question whether Moses wrote it, the book is historically false, so that it cannot be inspired of God, if Moses did not in fact deliver the discourses it ascribes to him, or if the narrative it ascribes to him be historically untrue. Our quotations have reference to the point as to the testimony of Christ and His apostles.

"Beyond a doubt, in the estimation of Jesus and His apostles, the Old Testament religion was supernatural in its origin; and its documents were inspired and authoritative. Equally beyond controversy is the assertion that to their minds the Old Testament was incomplete: the Old Testament a prophecy—not simply in its predictions, but in its history and institutions—and the New its fulfilment: the Old creating longings and expectations of a Messiah and a Messianic king-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. as to Dr. Robertson, above, p. 332, etc.

dom, and the New placing over against them the person and work of Jesus and the kingdom He preached. The bond, therefore, between the New and the Old is not one of mere historic succession, but is organic. It needs no proof to justify the statement that if Jesus and the apostles attributed the Mosaic writings to the age and authorship of Moses, they would be in harmony with their attitude toward the religion of Israel. It is very doubtful whether any other view of the relation of Moses to Israel and these writings can be adjusted to the New Testament" (p. 374).

"If this exposition [of John v. 45-47 by Schaff in *Lange's Commentary*] be just, our Lord must have had in His mind the body of writings known as the writings of Moses.

"Should a doubt remain, it should be removed by the reflection, that unless by 'his writings' our Lord intended to name the Pentateuch, there was to those who heard Him no method of determining His meaning. If we give up the doctrine that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, we are absolutely unable to discover what are the writings of Moses to which Jesus appealed. It is a notorious fact that while there is more or less of agreement on the part of the critics in their general analysis of the Pentateuch, there is no approach to unanimity in the proportion ascribed to the date and authorship of Moses. The proportion ranges from zero through varying degrees, according to the fancy or preconceived notions of the critic. Denying, then, that our Lord referred the Jews to the Pentateuch, and the *whole* Pentateuch, when He spoke of disbelief of the writings of Moses, we are compelled to say that He based a most solemn indictment against their most sacred beliefs and their religious life upon their great leader's writings, of which, like his sepulchre, no man knoweth unto this day" (p. 371).

#### NOTE H.

"A high authority assures us that 'great men are not always wise,' and it may be thought that the theory which has obtained such wide acceptance among the learned does not really rest upon a solid foundation. Similar assaults upon the New Testament have been made from time to time, and occasionally seemed to carry all before them. Yet the result has vindicated the steadfast faith of the old father who once, at a time when the heavens were overhung with black, exclaimed, *Nebeccula est, transibit*" (Dr. Chambers in *Moses and his Recent Critics*, p. 23).



## NOTE I.

The following is from Dr. T. W. Chambers' notice of Driver's "Introduction," in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, July 1892:—

"Dr. Driver distinctly disowns evolution in this matter, and holds the old theory of a 'progressive revelation,' but that does not prevent us from insisting that his theory of the composition of the Old Testament coheres much more exactly with the naturalistic hypothesis of the origin of Hebrew religion than it does with the claim that that religion was the result of direct divine communications. It has been carried out to this extent by Wellhausen and the late Professor Kuenen, and this seems to be the logical outcome of the speculation. Men brought up in the serene atmosphere of an evangelical faith, like Dr. Driver, may for a time and even permanently resist the consequence; but how will it be with their pupils and followers? Will they fail to carry out the scheme to what seems to be its natural and legitimate result? And if they do so carry it out, must not the consequence be fatal? The Old Testament and the New are inseparably bound together, and the giving up of the one must be followed by the giving up of the other. Nor is this a mere inference. It is sustained by facts. There is no case on record in which men have given up the Old Testament and then for any length of time retained the New.

"Hence the unutterable importance of this question of the composite authorship of the Pentateuch. We are told often enough that it is a mere question of criticism, and may be settled one way or other *salvâ fide*. It is a question which ultimately bears heavily on the point whether we have a divine revelation, and whether the Bible is such a revelation" (see following NOTE K).

## NOTE K.

The following is from Professor Dwinell's Essay in *Moses and his Recent Critics*, "Bearings of the New Hypothesis on Questions of Biblical Theology, Inspiration, and the Authority of the Bible generally,"—the title given by the editor: the *inner* title being as in above, NOTE A. On the present point he speaks as follows:—

"The bearing of this criticism [the "Secondary" in above, NOTE A] on the doctrine of *inspiration* should not be overlooked. The only inspiration possible under the theory is of a very equivocal order, morally and spiritually; for it is an inspiration that does not keep the sacred writers from making

up a pretended framework of history in which to set their characters and instructions. It does not interfere with their asserting things to be facts which never took place. It does not stand in the way of consciously ante-dating and representing things as having occurred centuries before which really occurred later, or deliberately writing after the events had taken place, and giving to the writing the form of prediction, and passing it off as prophecy. It does not stay the sacred authors from writing out of their own intuitions or experience or thoughts and yearnings, and claiming that these teachings came direct from God. A kind of inspiration which admits of all these duplicities and falsities must be accepted as true if this criticism is admitted. Surely inspiration drops to a low and ignominious plane on this theory! No wonder there is a cry over the world from those who follow the critics, that the doctrine of inspiration must be recast! Yes, *down-cast*."

To the same effect, in less directly pointed manner, speaks Principal Caven (see above, NOTE G):—

"Marcion and the Gnostics did not receive any part of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the Old Testament itself they held to be of evil origin. So decided were they against the Old Testament, that they would not admit into their New Testament canon the books which especially bear witness to the Old. But the Christian Church had followed its Master in regarding the Old Testament as the Word of God, as the Bible of the ages before the advent, and as still part of the Bible for the Christian Church. Not until the days of developed rationalism was this position called in question, except among unbelievers. But it is obvious that the style of criticism, which in our time is frequently applied to the Old Testament (not to say anything about the New), touching its history, its laws, its morality, is quite inconsistent with the recognition of any special divine characteristics or authority as belonging to it."

(See preceding NOTE I). These witnesses on behalf of the received view make protestation that the half-way view is not reconcilable with the doctrine of a really divine authorship of Scripture.

#### NOTE L.

Dr. Bissell's Essay in *Moses and his Recent Critics*, "Analysis of the Codes," came four years after the (London) publication of his work, *The Pentateuch* (1885), from which the following extracts are made:—

"The principles of this type of criticism allow one to impute to the Old Testament writers motives and practices which totally unfit them to be the medium of spiritual instruc-

tion. The Scriptures, it is true, have a human side; but it has been left to those critics to charge upon not a few of its [their] writers conscious trickery and imposition. And that they fully believe their own charge, is sufficiently evinced by the treatment they themselves accord to the sacred writers. They seem to think it needful to meet the supposed *finesse* not only with composure, but with an irreverence, a triviality, a spirit of depreciation, which show that a feeling of contempt has overcome the natural sense of sorrow and shame which such a fact might be expected to produce. Wellhausen has been at special pains to point out that whatever in the sacred history has a decidedly religious colouring—‘pious utterances,’ ‘unctuous speeches, to break the monotony,’ is his fleer at them—is pure hypocrisy, the work of an artist, and not the real experience of living men, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost’ (pp. 15, 16).

“The Levitical laws, with their framework of history, reaching from the creation of the world, through the Exodus, to the Promised Land, essentially a fraud of the time of the exile. The books of Chronicles, written of design to sustain this spurious document, and in all their history, which runs parallel to that of the books of Samuel and the Kings, adroitly keeping up the mystification. The books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings themselves, where, if anywhere, we might expect genuine history, widely interpolated and retouched in the interest of this same counterfeit of the exilian priests. Is this caricature, or is it criticism? Is it interpreting history or manufacturing history? Our Christian instincts revolt at such a profanation” (p. 16).<sup>1</sup>

“Steal! faugh! a fico for the phrase. *Convey* the wise it call.” There is much grief on account of employment of such words as “imposture,” “fraud,” “falsehood,” “forgery,” in this connection. If the *thing* be there, then to “call evil good” is a sin, especially against the “*charity* (unfeigned)” which “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth” (1 Cor. xiii. 6; cp. John xviii. 37).

#### NOTE M.

The following is from M. Vos, *The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuchal Codes*:<sup>2</sup>—

“By far the most formidable objection raised by modern critics against the unity of the pentateuchal codes, rests on the assertion that they betray by their contents and form a natural growth from the simple to the complex, and that their various

<sup>1</sup> See Professor Binnie, above, p. 325, footnote.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 279.

parts represent each a different stage of religious development, and fit exactly into the historical periods to which their origin is respectively ascribed. This evolutionary theory, of course, has led to the reconstruction of the Jewish history. If the essence of the Christian conception of revelation consist in a direct interference of God, the creation of a new order of things, the implanting by an act of grace of what nature had become unable to produce; if the perfect and absolute stand here at the beginning, and are the source, not the fruit, of all development, —then it will surely follow that a naturalistic philosophy must end with the beginning, and begin with the end. The difference must needs be radical. Whoever, like Dr. Kuenen, rules out the supernatural element from Israel's history cannot accept a half-way position: he will place the contents of revelation at the end, because, at every other point, their interpolation would disturb the order of development" (p. 81).

"The phenomena admit of only two theories for their explanation; more and more the extremes draw to themselves the occupants of abandoned intermediate positions; we have to choose between Baal and God, nature-worship and supernatural religion, fraud and history. The modern criticism has not shrunk from taking the former of these alternatives. The Priest Code cannot be Mosaic. Still, it bears the impress of Mosaic origin. To reconcile these two facts, only one way is left open: what is not genuine, and still so striking, must have been fabricated with a purpose; the Mosaic dress of the priestly laws is woven for it by the skilful hands of exilic and post-exilic fraud" (pp. 205, 206). The theoretical *Aholiab*!

ADDITION.—In the above definition, the writer is not so clear as he is in the detailed elaborations of his work. He unduly, in this relation, narrows the meaning of "evolution"<sup>1</sup> if not, also, that of revelation. There is no obvious *theological* objection to evolution of species in physical nature; it was affirmed by highest theology in the person of Thomas Aquinas, "the angelic doctor." For it does not on the face of it exclude *creation*—mediate creation, as in the origination of individuals. So as to revelation: the question on the face of the matter is only regarding *supernaturalism*. Was *that*—no matter how embryonically and indistinctly—in the Sinaitic beginning? Then, the *kind* or *species* of thing, which now is what is in question, is here; and it is irrationalism—"historical absurdity"—to object to the same kind of thing at a later stage, in the child as born, or when the child is become father of the man. The "thimble-rigging,"<sup>2</sup> that has been charged against revolutionary criticism, largely consists in putting out of view the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 293, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 296, footnote.



fact, that the *kind* of thing, which is the essential matter in question, is as real, and as truly decisive of the controversy, in any one place, or time, or *degree*, as in any other. Confused use of words here tends to help the hiding of the pea.

Some "scientists" ascribe natural evolution of species ("Spec's I grewed."—*Topsy*) to a something of specific determination in the surrounding system of nature. This is a sort of crude unintelligent pantheism, making a blind universal Whole to be the unconscious parent or undesigning author of all (so-called) individuals and species in detail. Parallel to this is Dr. Cheyne's accounting for the psalmody of Israel by tracing the genesis of that soul, which in the psalmody finds voice and wings of song, to outside influences of heathen peoples with whom Israel came into close connection in the later evil days. As well might we trace the genesis of Æolian harp music to the wandering winds. "The poet's lyre is the poet's heart." And in that heathen world there was nothing in the least resembling the heart that throbs and thrills in every note of all the songs of Zion. That heart, which beat in the true Israelitish bosom, and only there of all the world over (Isa. vi. 6) was a distinctly new creation among mankind. The supernaturalism, which was claimed by the prophets, was thus reflected in the true Israelitish people, as the stars of the firmament are imaged in still waters here below. But supposing the supernaturalism of a primeval revelation of God, and new creation of man, there was abundant room for a true evolution, from that beginning, on to a completed unfolding of what from the outset had been folded in the primeval inauguration, of "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

#### NOTE N.

"No forged body of laws could ever be imposed on any people. No supposititious code, issued in the name of Moses in a subsequent age, could have been accepted without inquiry, and instated as the law of the land. It is indeed supposable that the current laws and usages of any given period might be popularly supposed to be more ancient than they really were. But this is not what we are asked to believe. We are told that the first that was known about the book of Deuteronomy is that it was found in the temple in the days of Josiah, etc." (Prof. W. H. Green, *Brit. and For. Ev. Rev.*, April 1882, p. 320).

#### NOTE O.

"The objection"—on ground of seeming immobility—"is completely neutralised when we consider further that the

Mosaic Code leaves abundant room for all the modifications that could be demanded by the progressive life of the people. It is not, and was not intended to be, a complete system of political institutions; and objections have been made to it on this very ground of its lack of completeness, urging that it could never have been put into actual operation without the supply of some important gaps in the legislation. The fact is, that the Mosaic regulations presuppose and were superinduced upon an already existing political constitution, and customs that had the force of laws. The aim of Moses simply was to establish and perpetuate the covenant relation between Israel and Jehovah. It was not to give fixity to one particular system of civil administration, but to incorporate and express religious ideas in the national life" (Prof. W. H. Green, *the same article*, p. 328).

## NOTE P.

"It is not a little remarkable that modern critics, while they tell us very particularly the historical circumstances under which the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes were produced, can tell us very little about the earliest of all the codes, the Jehovistic. Yet this is the very one, we should think, which must have had a controlling influence on subsequent legislation and codification" (Robertson, *Early History of Israel*, p. 359).—"A glance at the prescriptions contained in the Book of the Covenant will show that it contains, though in a brief and germinal manner, legislation in all the directions that are followed out more fully in the larger codes, and is enough to suggest the hundreds of cases and relations similar to those then provided for, that must have arisen in the daily life of the people, and demanded standing rules for their settlement" (p. 388).

The critical theory to which Prof. Robertson is here alluding, is that the Jehovist Code originated (B.C. 850-750) two centuries before the Deuteronomic. 1. Is it a likely story that, long after the reign of Solomon, such a code should be written with *only* so much as this in it, if there was no other written law? 2. [His more general thesis.] Is it a likely story that, where there is produced such a written code as this at that supposed time, *literature*, historical and religious, had no previous existence?

"Let it be supposed that this code is merely the embodiment of praxis or the chrystallisation of custom,—and it is distinctly more,—the custom or practice was at all events of so high antiquity and invested with such authority that the code

was made Mosaic; and we ask the critics in vain for an explanation of this ascription of the very earliest laws to a time so long antecedent and to circumstances so positively historical.

"But what we want very particularly to know is the occasion that at this precise time called for a codification of law of this modest compass. What set the codification agoing at least two centuries before it occurred to any one to prepare an authoritative book of law?" (pp. 390, 391).

## NOTE Q.

"It is therefore inaccurate to describe the position of Graf as a conclusion of criticism. It was simply a hypothesis to evade a difficulty in which criticism had landed him.

"And then, when it is considered what is implied in the position that the narratives must go with the laws, it cannot but be admitted that the hypothesis is so far-reaching and revolutionary that it should be accepted only when every other explanation of the phenomenon fails. For it amounts to a thorough discrediting of the historical value of the narratives of these books with which the laws are so closely interwoven; and to an ascription of fiction, if not fraud, to the writers, which will render it extremely difficult for sober criticism to rely upon any testimony which is borne by the Hebrew writers to the facts of their national history. So that here again, when pushed home to its central position, we find that the modern view, claiming to be strictly critical, in reality throws discredit on the documents which it starts to criticise, and which are the only sources available for obtaining information regarding the history which is to be described" (Robertson, p. 419).

## NOTE R.

"But it may be urged, if there was a detailed authoritative code in existence, why did Ezekiel, even in vision, deviate from it? Well, on the critical hypothesis the Deuteronomic law at least existed as authoritative, and yet Ezekiel deviates from it. If it is still asked, How could he, prophet though he was, quietly set aside the recognised law? The question again rises, After he, a prophet speaking in God's name by direct revelation, sketched this law, how did the priests in the exile pass by Ezekiel's draft, and frame a divergent code?" (R., p. 433).

## NOTE S.

"Again, and in a much more objectionable form, comes in the supposition, whereby a false historical setting was invented

for the laws of the Levitical Code, by carrying them back to Moses and the desert, simply in order to give the laws higher sanction. . . . The question is . . . whether a school composed of men like Ezekiel and Ezra were likely to have with boundless inventiveness concocted all this history, or our modern critics are ransacking the treasures of their wits to find an artificial explanation of a thing which is much more simple than they make it" (R., pp. 434, 435).

NOTE T.<sup>1</sup>

"That any writer in the times of the Hebrew monarchy or later could have worked out of his own consciousness, or of any fragments or traditions, a whole so coherent and harmonious, and so full of minute touches relating to facts, places, and customs of which he must have been personally ignorant, would be a miracle of which we certainly have no example in modern times. It is to be observed, however, that while, on the one hand, an inconceivable amount of knowledge and skill must be assumed on the part of literary forgers to whom we are supposed to owe the books of Moses, these men are, on the other hand, represented with singular inconsistency to have been careless and silly to the last degree, in admitting palpable contradictions and anachronisms in their work.

"If, however, we look at the other side of the question, from an historical point of view, the facts of the Exodus are all consistent with the necessity of a leader, lawgiver, and historian, like Moses; a collector of the nation's history up to his own time in Genesis; a chronicler of events during the march to Canaan (Ex. xvii. 14, xxiv. 4, 7), probably with the aid of trained Egyptian scribes, of whom there must have been many in the camp of Israel; a legislator whose laws were framed from time to time as exigency required, were incorporated in the narrative of his work, and were finally summed up in that wonderful and most archaic compound of history, law, and poetry we call the book of Deuteronomy. No minute and laboured criticism can ever avail to shake this fabric any more than paper pellets can sink an ironclad" (Sir J. William Dawson, F.R.S., *Contemp. Rev.*, June 1889, pp. 908, 909).

The writer modestly poses as an unlearned critic. But for fifty years he has been a daily reader of the Bible with the help of its original tongues; he is a naturalist and archæologist of world-wide highest reputation; and he has studied the biblical antiquities now in question on the spot, in laborious exploratory travels in the East. He, like Major Conder, has experienced

<sup>1</sup> Cp. footnote above, p. 260.



incivility from "scholars"; and it is amusingly instructive to find him say,—

"Finally, I am quite guiltless of the belief that any share of the discovery of the Egyptian element in the Pentateuch belongs to me. On the contrary, I remember when it was customary with a certain school of objectors to say that the Egyptian discoveries had proved that the whole Pentateuch, including its religious rights and its laws, was nothing but an adaptation and abridgment of the Egyptian learning and theology. It now suits such persons to take the opposite side" (p. 907).

Here, too, "the case being altered alters the case."<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTE V.

The anticipation in the body of this work, relatively to an approaching collapse of the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen theorising, is corroborated by the remarkable papers of Klostermann (*Neue Kirchliche Zeitung*), recently published (A.D. 1891 and 1892), on the history of the origination of the Pentateuch. His positions are such as the following:—1. The said theorising proceeds on the demonstrably false assumption, that our existing Bible text, the Ezra Hebrew edition, represents the original Pentateuch "documents" in such wise, that we can safely reason with reference to linguistic and other aspects of the text as if we had those originals before us.—2. Presumably the real original pentateuchal writing underwent modifications in the course of ages, through being made the basis of priestly or Levitical instruction in Israel, and for that purpose being modified in forms of expression correspondingly to variations in the usage among the people, coming into existence, variously in different districts, from generation to generation (cp. editions of Luther's Catechism). There would thus come to be, *e.g.*, respectively in North and in South Palestine, various "recensions" of the original. And the Ezra text, now before us, would, like the text of our printed Greek New Testament, be formed through comparing a variety of texts that had so come into use.—3. The variations in the existing text with reference, *e.g.*, the use of the words "Jahveh" and "Elohim,"—which are alleged as necessitating the supposition of so many different original authors of our Pentateuch, can be accounted for by supposing different recensions of one original: Ezra and his men at one place preferring the reading of recension A, and at another that of B, while in some places they found it best to combine the two in a reading A B (the symbolism here is ours).

<sup>1</sup> Cp. as to Graf, above, p. 273, etc.

—4. While on this view various alleged “discrepancies” relatively to the Deuteronomic legislation die of manifested irrelevance or insignificance, on the other hand, demonstrably, the legislation cannot have preceded what we have in the “Priest Code” part of the middle pentateuchal books, and in kindred portions of Genesis; but presupposes the existence of these, for substance, in form as well as in matter.

The eagle, who has so come in upon those doves of Corioli, is himself a past master of Old Testament higher criticism. It will be inquired with deep interest whether, on approved methods of that criticism, he has really found a way to solution of the problem, how to account for the existing condition of the pentateuchal Scriptures on the supposition of a Mosaic origination of the Pentateuch or of its institutions. In the meantime, relatively to the sceptical theorising in question, the appearance of such a manifesto of a true higher critic (cp. Tit. i. 12) is like a powder-magazine explosion within the citadel or camp. And *quoad ultra*, “he that believeth” shall not make haste.

#### NOTE W.

“What the very earliest worship of Egypt was, it is perhaps impossible to say. But those who have studied the subject most carefully have noticed, that the nearer we get to the beginning of things the simpler and purer dogma becomes. And there are those who affirm that the earliest theology of the Egyptians was monotheistic.”—Kellogg, *Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in Egypt*, New York, 1887; p. 62. His footnote here follows,—

Brugsch, *Religion Mythologie* (Leipzig, 1884; only the first half is as yet published); Renouf’s “Hibbert Lectures” for 1879; *Rev. Arch.*, vol. for 1860, Part I., containing articles by De Rouge on “The Funeral Ritual of the Ancient Egyptians”; Pierret’s *Essai sur la Mythologie Egyptienne* (Paris, 1879); Lepsius’ *Älteste Texte des Todtenbuchs*; Max Müller on “Solar Myths” in the *Nineteenth Century* (Dec. 1885); Maspero’s *Histoire Ancienne*, 1886, p. 25 *et seq.*; also, his *Guide au Musée du Boulaq* (1884), p. 147, on the “Pantheon Egyptien,” etc.

In his preceding context, pp. 60–62, Kellogg has a commentary on the historical fact of an Egyptian national establishment in the reign of Amenophis IV., not long after the close of Joseph’s long life. The one God was *Aten* (cp. Heb. *Adonai*). And it is a question of Egyptology whether this revolution, extending over several reigns, may not have been connected with Israelitish influence. Kellogg suggests that it may also have been a conscious regression toward the earliest

known Egyptian religion, the quasi-monotheism of sun-worship. "The sun-worship" (he says, p. 63) "is the only universal religion met in ancient Egypt."

"The view [that the conception was of one first cause of all wrestling for expression] serves to explain the multitude of local deities, all expressing the same conception. For it is certainly true that in the earliest Egypt no one of them had the pre-eminence. These local deities merely show what philosophical conceptions of the Supreme Being and His attributes were most potent in their localities. Then, *e.g.*, the Memphis priests, explaining the origin of things, believed that they were made by some creator, and they called him Ptak, 'the maker or shaper.' The Theban priests put more emphasis on the inscrutable and mysterious character of the Being who was the author of all being, and so called him Amen,—'the concealed.' But in the beginning there were perfectly co-ordinate conceptions and co-ordinate deities; recognised as such, wherever known. And yet, underlying them all was the idea, that never entirely lost its power, of the One God, who simply 'manifests' Himself in these almost numberless forms; thereby to express the variety of His attributes" (pp. 64, 65—with a footnote reference to "Hibbert Lectures"—1889, pp. 89, 215—and to De Rougé in *Rev. Arch.*, 1860, p. 230. The allusion in "manifests" is, p. 62, "to an expression that often occurs," "to describe the One true God," "manifests Himself in millions of forms." . . . "The Heliopolite priests, through all changes of dynasties and of dogmas, persisted in emphasising the story of Osiris or Ra, who was really Egypt's one God. The pious Egyptian, no matter where he lived, was most anxious at death to be identified with Osiris, and to enjoy that eternal life which could alone be possessed by becoming one with him").





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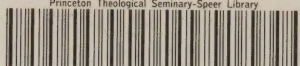


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